

Return of the little ships: The proud armada leaving the White Cliffs of Dover yesterday on the voyage to Dunkirk to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the evacuation from the beaches. Report, page 22

Labour launches policy for the 90s Kinnock offers new partnership but sets no price

By PHILIP WEBSTER AND ROBIN OAKLEY

LABOUR yesterday promised a new partnership between government and industry, responsible management of the economy and a strong relationship with the European Community as its programme for the 1990s.

Mr Neil Kinnock launched his party's campaign to end its long period in opposition with an attack on the Government's "11 years of squalor, danger and under-funding", saying his policy prospects, *Looking to the Future*, offered new chances for the people of Britain.

He promised to stabilize the

economy by negotiating Britain's entry into the European exchange-rate mechanism and imposing credit controls and financial disciplines that would make lower interest rates possible.

Throughout the London launch of the 20,000-word document, Mr Kinnock and his Shadow Cabinet colleagues emphasized Labour's determination to counter inflation. The party would spend only what the country could afford, Mr Kinnock said. Labour was looking forward with "honesty, realism and imagination" and condemned the Government for behaving with "arrogance, complacency and deviousness".

The programme is not costed, but Mr Kinnock agreed the prospect of reducing the tax burden was remote. Mr John Smith, the shadow Chancellor, said detailed tax rates would not be available until after the election.

The new policy envisages a starting rate below 20 per cent, rising by a series of bands to a top rate of 50 per cent, which will in practice be 59 per cent because of the abolition of the ceiling on employees' national insurance contributions. The number of bands and the rates of tax in between would be a matter for decision in each Budget of the next Labour government. "Contents of Budgets are not announced in advance," Mr Smith said.

Nor does the document detail Labour's plan for a property tax to replace the poll tax. Mr Bryan Gould, the shadow Secretary of State for the Environment, said that publication of Labour's proposals were likely to be delayed until the Government's

Continued on page 22, col 4

INSIDE New policy for Telecom

British Telecom is to change its pricing structure to put more weight on rental and installation charges and less on charges for calls, particularly over long distances.

The company also plans to put business communications and residential telephone services in different divisions and to introduce different tariffs for business and personal calls. Page 23

Thatcher letter

The Prime Minister has written to the Organization of British Muslims dissociating herself from remarks made by Mr Norman Tebbit suggesting that some members of ethnic minorities fail the "cricket test". Page 5

Baby deaths

Doctors and labour ward staff are criticized by a report by the Medical Protection Society for mistakes which contributed to the deaths of mothers and babies over a five year period. Page 6

Hi-tech reviver

High-technology companies and diversification are helping to revitalize the West Midlands, where the recession shut down much of the traditional industry. A three-page Special Report describes the revival. Pages 31-33

Open degrees

Degrees awarded by the Open University in England will be published tomorrow. Those for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland will appear on Monday.

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Mr Ryzhkov: Threatened with no-confidence vote

Radicals attack Soviet reforms

From MARY DEBESKY
IN MOSCOW

THE Soviet Prime Minister, Mr Nikolai Ryzhkov, yesterday presented his long-awaited proposals for a free-market economy, and was immediately threatened with a vote of no confidence from parliamentary deputies who considered the programme too weak.

Mr Ryzhkov's programme, and a supplementary Bill on pricing, argue for substantial price rises on most staple goods, extensive social security provision to shield most from the consequences of the price rises, and the gradual disengagement of the state from much economic activity.

The programme envisages that by the year 2000 up to 80 per cent of housing could be in private or co-operative ownership, 50 per cent of shops and restaurants would be owned co-operatively or leased, and the trouble would be fully convertible.

The increases, which will entail a trebling of the price of bread from July 1, 1991, and the doubling of most other basic food prices on January 1, are the first of a three-stage plan which will shift the balance to free-market prices over a five-year period.

Although the magnitude of the rises and doubts that social security guarantees will be honoured have frightened many ordinary Russians, reformists were disappointed.

Mr Gennadi Filshin, an economist and member of the radical inter-regional group of parliamentary deputies, yesterday led the group in calling for a vote of no confidence in the Government.

He urged the opposition to reject the programme as a whole, demand a referendum on the question of price increases and call for a "government of national trust".

Yetshin support, page 8

Energy savings could be £120bn

By MICHAEL MCCARTHY, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN could save nearly £120 billion in energy costs over the next 15 years if it adopted a much stricter strategy to combat global warming, one of the country's leading energy consultants said on the eve of Mrs Margaret Thatcher's keynote speech on climate change this morning.

The Prime Minister will speak of plans to tackle the greenhouse effect when she opens a new climate prediction centre at the Meteorological Office headquarters at Bracknell, Berkshire. Her speech will come a few hours before the publication of a key United Nations scientific assessment of the problem, which will give a sombre warning that global warming is under way.

However, the core of the Government's strategy to stabilize emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂) - the gas responsible for the greenhouse effect at 1990 levels by 2005 - is "a feeble response to a very serious situation", said Mr Gerald Leach, a member of the Government's Advisory Committee on Renewable Energy.

In a detailed study to be published next month by the Stockholm Environment Institute, Mr Leach says that a cut of at least 20 per cent in the

UK's CO₂ emissions, rather than stabilization, is achievable by the same date.

A 20 per cent worldwide cut by 2005 was called for by the Toronto Conference in 1988 and has been considerable backing from scientists and environmentalists.

"The technical potential exists to exceed a 20 per cent reduction target for 2005, by a substantial margin, even with considerable growth in the economy," Mr Leach's report says. The study suggests that such a cutback would save £119 billion in energy costs for domestic and industrial consumers, based on 1987 energy prices.

The total investment required in energy-saving measures to achieve this would not exceed £20 billion. His report gives precisely-costed estimates for six sectors: insulation for dwellings and industrial buildings, replacement of two types of gas boilers, and installation of high-efficiency fridge freezers and lightbulbs.

For an outlay of £8.1 billion "or one quarter of the UK consumers' annual energy bill", the report says, energy saving in these sectors alone could account for 10.5 per cent of the emission reductions.

THE threat of travel problems throughout Europe grew last night as Italian air-traffic controllers called five days of strikes designed to hit the Bank holiday weekend and spectators travelling to the World Cup. Four British airports, including Heathrow, and two seaports will also suffer disruption with immigration staff planning industrial action over pay.

The Italian controllers' union announced strikes for tomorrow and Sunday and for June 4-6 at the Leonardo da Vinci airport in Rome. A strike would seriously hamper flights to other airports.

Immigration staff at terminals 3 and 4 of Heathrow airport will strike for 24 hours from Sunday. Staff at Stansted airport will strike for 24 hours on Sunday. Dover East and West docks will suffer strike action tomorrow. At Harwich, immigration officers are to withdraw goodwill and co-operation.

Most people in California spend two hours a day commuting, Miss Yee said, and more and more are transforming their cars into offices. "The bottom line is the need of businesspeople to use their time and to use it productively and to be in touch while on the road," said Michael Messman, editor of a new magazine called *Mobile Office*.

Cars are increasingly fitted with portable fax machines and desks that can be attached to the passenger seat. Mr Steven Syfers, a real estate agent in Orange County, California, recently bought a stretched limousine equipped with a video cassette recorder, two lap-top computers, and an electronic drinks bar. His chauffeur/secretary has her own cellular

phone to arrange his meetings while they are travelling.

Mr Charles Perry, a Los Angeles design consultant who works for such companies as General Motors, Volvo and BMW, recently completed his own version of the "car-as-environment". The show car places the driver in the "command position" from which he or she can view a satellite navigation system, which shows the car's position on a television screen.

"The Big Three" car-makers have started to install some "car-cooling" technology. Chrysler, which tried unsuccessfully to introduce record players into its cars in the 1950s, has just brought out Visorphone, a cellular phone built into the driver's sun visor. Ford offers a similar system and General Motors has one with the microphone in the rear-view mirror.

Robson to quit after the Cup

By JOHN GOODBODY, SPORTS NEWS CORRESPONDENT

BOBBY Robson yesterday announced he will be resigning as manager of the England football team after the World Cup, which begins on June 9. Mr Robson, who had another year of his nine-year contract to run, will become manager of PSV Eindhoven, the Dutch club, on July 16.

Although the Football Association had told Mr Robson that his contract was unlikely to be extended and gave permission for the negotiations with Eindhoven to take place, the timing of the announcement will scarcely help the morale of the English party. They leave today for Sardinia to begin preparations for the tournament.

The FA was informed on Friday about Mr Robson's plans. It will release him from his contract and had agreed that the players and the media

would be told on Monday of the decision. However, several newspapers speculated yesterday that Mr Robson was resigning because of the possibility that further revelations about his personal life were imminent.

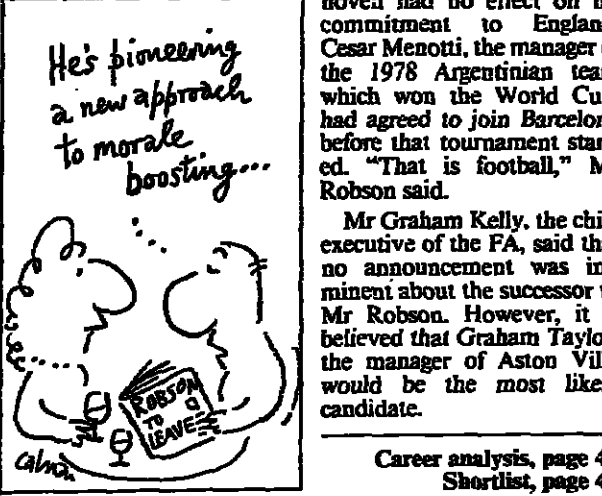
At a press conference yesterday Mr Robson described these suggestions as garbage and emphasized that morale was good and that all he wanted to do was "to win the World Cup for this country". He criticized the journalists saying that "some of you have ruined that for the sake of a flimsy story".

Mr Robson said that he planned to make an official announcement next week and was clearly furious because news of his departure was leaked to newspapers. "We agreed to keep it quiet," he added.

His agreement to join Eindhoven had no effect on his commitment to England. Cesar Menotti, the manager of the 1978 Argentinian team which won the World Cup, had agreed to join Barcelona before that tournament started. "That is football," Mr Robson said.

Mr Graham Kelly, the chief executive of the FA, said that no announcement was imminent about the successor to Mr Robson. However, it is believed that Graham Taylor, the manager of Aston Villa would be the most likely candidate.

Career analysis, page 44
Shortlist, page 44



DTI error apology by Ridley

By SHEILA GUNN
POLITICAL REPORTER

MR NICHOLAS Ridley blamed a "breakdown in communication" yesterday for the Department of Trade and Industry's blunder in prematurely releasing a monopoly report on Kingfisher's proposed £568 million takeover of Dixons. In a short press release, the Secretary of State of Trade said: "I apologize to all concerned on behalf of the Government."

Copies of the Government's report blocking the bid went on sale a day early and before the Stock Exchange had been informed of the decision.

It led to active trading in Dixons shares before the price was affected by the news. Dixons shares fell 11p to 120p and shares in the Woolworths to Comet retailing group Kingfisher rose 7p to 315p in morning trading. It coincided with publication of the Commons trade and industry committee's condemnation of Mr Ridley's handling of the House of Fraser affair.

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Child benefit leaves 'party of the family' in a quandary

By NICHOLAS WOOD
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

ANOTHER Whitehall battle is looming over child benefit as Mr Tony Newton prepares to try to persuade the Treasury to lift its three-year freeze and uprate the payment in line with inflation.

Last year, Mr Norman Lamont, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, rejected the Secretary of State for Social Security's appeal for the £7.25 weekly benefit to be increased in line with rising prices. The move saved the Government about £250 million, £70 million of which was used to improve support for the poorest families while £100 million went on improving benefits in residential and

nursing homes. Now Mr Newton has decided to try again, in spite of warnings from Mr Lamont and Mr John Major, the Chancellor, that this year's public spending round will be toughest in recent years.

In the run-up to the general election, there will be a premium on moves that will prove popular with voters. However, ministers recognize that an increase next April after a three-year standstill could be interpreted as a cynical attempt to bribe the electorate.

Mr Newton has made clear to his Cabinet colleagues that the Conservatives will have to resolve the uncertainty surrounding their attitude towards the universal payments to 6.75

million mothers. He does not believe that the ambiguous 1987 manifesto commitment to child benefit will withstand the rigours of another election campaign.

Two separate teams of civil servants in the Department of Social Security and the Treasury are now examining government policy in this area and preparing options for possible inclusion in the next Conservative manifesto. They have been exchanging papers and holding joint meetings, but they have yet to put proposals to ministers.

Pressure is also growing in Tory thinktanks and the Prime Minister's policy unit for the family to be made a central theme of her programme for the

next term. The Centre for Policy Studies is backing the reintroduction of child tax allowances — scrapped by the last Labour government — to run alongside child benefit. That idea is being examined by the two teams of civil servants, who will also consider whether the Government would be better advised to scrap universal payments and concentrate support on needy families.

Child tax allowances have been endorsed by Lord Joseph, the former Cabinet minister, as part of a wider critique of government policy on the family. In a Centre for Policy Studies pamphlet last week, he said the family was disintegrating under the pressures of social changes, such as promiscuity and

drug abuse, and accused the Government of applying a financial squeeze to parents struggling to rear their children in a culturally and spiritually hostile environment. The Prime Minister also entered the debate, saying she did not want to see "a generation of crèche children".

These broader concerns about the health of the family are also being voiced by the Institute of Economic Affairs, which has championed the work of Dr Charles Murray, an American sociologist, who has said that the breakdown of the traditional family is fostering an "underclass" of criminally-disposed anti-social people.

The Department of Social Security

and the Lord Chancellor's Department are examining proposals to ensure that absent fathers meet the maintenance obligations towards their children. The Department of Social Security may assume responsibility for enforcing all maintenance orders, rather than merely those of women on income support, but such a step would prove expensive.

The Department of the Environment is also considering whether unmarried mothers should automatically be given priority on council house waiting lists.

Decisions on these areas could come before the next election, but it seems likely that they will also be presented as part of a package of measures for the manifesto.

Mates quits consultancy after dispute on interests

By RICHARD FORD, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE chairman of the Commons select committee on defence yesterday resigned as a consultant to a company offering guidance to manufacturers in the defence field.

Mr Michael Mates left the firm only eight days after he strongly denied there was any conflict of interest between his business activities and his chairmanship of the committee. His link with SGL Defence Limited has been the subject of criticism in the House of Commons and the issue of Mr Mates' business interests is presently being examined by the select committee on members' interests.

In a statement issued yesterday Mr Mates said he utterly refuted allegations about his business interests which had been made under the cloak of parliamentary privilege.

Mr Mates, Conservative MP for Hampshire East, said: "In view of the continuing controversy stimulated by the recent allegations, it is with regret that I have this morning told the directors of SGL Defence Ltd that I feel it in their best interest that I resign, because I have concluded that my association with them is not helping them to start a new enterprise in this environment."

"I have repeatedly stated that I have sought to comply with both the letter and the spirit of the rules relating to the disclosure of members' interests. I believe I have done so throughout my parliamentary career."

Mr Mates acted as a consultant to SGL Defence Ltd, a public relations company, which specialises in the defence field. It offers advice to manufacturers tendering for defence contracts along with providing strategic advice on developments in defence markets.

He has always insisted that there was no conflict of interest between his two roles because he did not deal with SGL Defence clients but gave advice to the company.

In the Register of Members' Interests published in January, Mr Mates declares his

association with the company. Earlier this month Mr Dale Campbell-Savours, Labour MP for Workington, said in the Commons defence contractors "should be advised not to get into bed with SGL Defence Ltd whose paid back is the chairman of the defence select committee". After protests, Mr Campbell-Savours altered the phrase to "paid servant".

Mr Mates' resignation will renew concern at Westminster over the lobbying activities on MPs. The Select Committee on Members' Interests is expected to issue a report later this year on lobbying.

Two days ago the evidence of a private hearing of the committee revealed that some cash payments made to MPs for introducing clients to a public relations company had not been registered in the Register of Members' Interests.

Mr Ian Greer, the chairman of Ian Greer Associates, gave evidence to the Select Committee that on six occasions during the last five years payments had been made to MPs who had introduced business to his company. He refused to tell a private session of the committee the names of the MPs but said only one payment had been registered in the Register of Members' Interests.

Mr Greer said some people would describe them as a "thank you payment". He refused to say whether the payments made to MPs between 1985 and 1990 were a percentage of the contract price with a client but said he would be prepared to settle for a percentage of 2 or 2.5 per cent. However, he admitted that the figure, excluding MPs, was normally higher than that.

In the Register published this year Mr Michael Grylls, the chairman of the Conservative backbench Trade and Industry committee, lists Ian Greer associates as a client. Mr John Butcher, the Conservative MP for Coventry South West, registers air travel to and from Brussels in November 1989 as having been sponsored by the same firm.

Cancer threat if ozone not saved

By PEARCE WRIGHT
SCIENCE EDITOR

TOUGHER controls are needed from a new round of negotiations next month on the timetable to phase out the use of CFCs (chlorofluorocarbons) and other man-made substances that are destroying the protective layer of ozone in the stratosphere, an international medical conference was told yesterday.

Dr Robin Russell Jones, consultant at St John's Hospital for Diseases of the Skin, in London, urged the representatives of the countries meeting in London next month to increase the number of man-made chemicals to be covered by the Montreal Protocol. He said that proposals for a 50 per cent reduction by the year 2000 should change to a total ban.

Dr Russell Jones said even with a total ban, concentrations in the upper atmosphere of destructive chemicals would increase over the next century. The subsequent rise in ultra-violet B radiation in the Sun's rays would increase the number of malignant melanomas and other skin cancers and cataracts, he said.

Under the best agreement, he calculated an increase of 3 to 5 per cent in skin cancers. There are 2,200 new melanoma cases a year and 900 deaths in Britain and 30,000 new cases a year of non-melanoma skin cancers leading to 400 deaths.

With the higher incidence of skin cancers in the United States, he calculates that a loss of 10 per cent of the ozone by the year 2050 (under a lenient protocol) would mean an extra 100,000 melanoma deaths in the US population born between 2030 and 2074 and 92 million more cases of non-melanoma skin cancers.

About 5,000 cases of prostate cancer a year in Britain may be due to radon, a naturally-occurring radioactive gas which leaks into houses from the ground, according to a report in *The Lancet* today.

Bristol University researchers estimate the gas is linked to about 2,500 cancer deaths a year. They have identified a link between radon levels in houses and leukaemia and other cancers, after a statistical investigation of the levels and of cancer incidences in 14 countries.



Armed police patrolling around Lambeth Magistrates' Court in south London yesterday as an agriculture student was charged with the illegal possession of two semi-automatic rifles with intent to endanger life. He was remanded in custody for a week (Mark Souster writes).

Kevin Barry O'Donnell, aged 20, made a four-minute appearance after his arrest in north London on Tuesday. Mr O'Donnell, from Coalisland, Co Tyrone, a student at Harper Adams Agricultural College, near Newport, Shropshire, and living at

Wilbrioughton hall, near Gosall Hall, Staffordshire, is charged that "on May 22 within the jurisdiction of the Central Criminal Court, you had in your possession a fire arm and ammunition, namely two Romanian AKM 7.62 semi-automatic rifles, with intent, by means thereof to endanger life", contrary to Section 16 of the Firearms Act 1968.

Mr O'Donnell was flanked by two plainclothes officers. He said nothing. Bail was not applied for and reporting restrictions were not lifted.

Firms failing in checks on employees' criminal records

By QUENTIN COWDRY, HOME AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

LARGE numbers of firms have little or no understanding of legislation which allows many convictions to become "spent" after fixed periods when checking the criminal records of prospective employees, according to research conducted by the Apex Trust.

The trust, a charity which seeks to promote employment

opportunities for ex-offenders, found that 448, or 84 per cent, of 534 companies sampled asked job applicants whether they had previous convictions. However, 213, or 40 per cent, of the employers also admitted they had not heard of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, which gives many offenders the right not to disclose convictions when applying for work and outlaws the unauthorized disclosure of their criminal records.

Only 71 firms — 13 per cent of the total — claimed to have a fair understanding of the provisions of the Act.

The research, which follows a recent report in *The Times* that more than one million job applicants each year have their names checked against police records, also suggests that two-thirds of private sector employers take negative steps to confirm whether applicants are being truthful about past convictions. Many said they did so by contacting previous employers but one firm admitted using a private detective.

A further example of the level of ignorance among firms came when they were questioned about "exempted" job categories — those where employers can legally insist that applicants disclose convictions, spent and unspent. Only 23 employers, or 6.7 per cent, claimed they could list the various exemptions. When these were asked to cite

exempted posts about half replied incorrectly.

The 1974 Act gives any offender who has not been sentenced to more than 30 months in prison the right to hide spent convictions, except where he or she applies for work involving substantial access to children, public services, such as the police, probation and the prison services, and in certain professions, such as the law, medicine and dentistry. Employers offering such posts have a corresponding right to refuse to employ, to demote or to dismiss an individual who fails to disclose all past convictions.

The Trust, which presented its findings this week to the Commons Select Committee on Employment, found that awareness about the Act was far higher within the public sector. However, of the 121 employers interviewed from this sector 15, or 12 per cent, confessed to being completely ignorant of the legislation.

Mr Bill Mather, chief executive of the Trust, said many ex-offenders faced "unexplained rejections" when seeking work.

The Trust accepted that some posts — particularly those involving access to "vulnerable" groups, such as children — needed pre-employment vetting but it believed the net had been spread too wide.

Brooke closer to achieving all-party talks

By EDWARD GORMAN, IRISH AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

THERE was further evidence yesterday that Mr Peter Brooke, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, could be on the way to pulling off a remarkable political feat in drawing Ireland's warring factions to the negotiating table.

After Tuesday's key talks with Unionist leaders, Mr Brooke met leaders of the Social Democratic and Labour Party at the Northern Ireland office in London. Mr John Hume MP, the party leader, emerged apparently satisfied, like his Unionist counterparts.

He said he had been encouraged by the scenario put to him by the minister, adding that he felt the process was moving to a point where the parties may get round the table. Mr Hume also indicated that he did not feel that his party's concerns over the future of the Anglo-Irish Secretariat at Maryfield were in any way being jeopardized by an offer made by Mr Brooke to the Unionists.

Given Mr Hume's close attachment to the Anglo-Irish Agreement, his renewed endorsement of the negotiating process yesterday is particularly significant.

The "Brooke initiative" is viewed as now moving gradually towards its second phase — out of so-called exploratory talks and into a series of bilateral exchanges between the party leaders through Mr Brooke. Next week, he will

meet Mr Gerard Collins, the Irish Foreign Minister, for further discussions and, separately, the leaders of the Northern Ireland Alliance Party.

The paucity of information available from official or party sources about what was being termed Mr Brooke's "magic formula" underlines the delicacy of the work, but also the sense of excitement that progress could be made towards the Government's goal of eventual talks on devolution.

One interpretation which looks more probable by the day came in a series of recent articles in *The Irish Times* by Mr Frank Millar, a former general secretary of the UUP, who suggested that Mr Brooke is proposing two sets of talks which would continue simultaneously with the eventual aim of "merging". The first, between the constitutional parties in the province, would discuss new structures for devolution; the second would be talks between Britain and Ireland.

According to this scenario, Mr Brooke's "magic formula" balances accession to Unionist preconditions over the agreement, the conference and the secretariat, with acceptance by Mr Molyneux and Mr Paisley that Dublin must eventually become involved in talks over the implications for Anglo-Irish relations, the agreement, and north-south relationships in any newly agreed devolved structures.

Kirk will invite a Catholic delegate

By KERRY GILL

The Church of Scotland and the Roman Catholic Church yesterday inched slightly closer when it was agreed that a Roman Catholic delegate could for the first time attend and address a future General Assembly.

The move, approved by the General Assembly in Edinburgh, means that a Roman Catholic will be allowed to attend all debates with the right to speak, but will not be able to vote on Kirk matters. At present, the Roman Catholic Church is invited to send an observer.

However, the decision provoked an angry reaction from the floor. Mr John Wright, an elder from Glasgow, said the deep divisions that existed between the churches, particularly regarding the sacrament of communion, made it inappropriate to give a Roman Catholic the status of delegate.

The assembly also agreed to seek discussions with the Roman Catholic Church over the question of communion to non-Catholics.

Meanwhile, the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, which is also meeting in Edinburgh, was told that the church should condemn homosexual practices as "flagrant sin and abomination".

The Rev Maurice Roberts said: "Homosexuality is a sin which is highly unnatural. Those who engage in these practices are deliberately committing a violation of nature."

Charter 'threat' to Rover deal

ROVER's deal for 24-hour working at its Longbridge plant in the West Midlands, which has created an extra 1,200 jobs, is threatened by the European Commission's programme for implementing the social charter. Mr Michael Howard, the Secretary of State for Employment, said last night.

He was commenting on the commission's social action programme to give effect to the declaration on workers' rights that the Prime Minister was unable to block six months ago in Strasbourg.

Fleet inquiry

A working party to investigate ways to reverse the decline in the size of Britain's merchant fleet was announced yesterday by Mr Cecil Parkinson, Secretary of State for Transport. It will be chaired jointly by the minister and Sir Jeffrey Sterling, the chairman of P&O.

Right of appeal

Senior civil servants yesterday welcomed a Commons committee report which says they have the right to appeal to the head of the service if they feel they have been given illegal or improper instructions. They were concerned that their traditional political impartiality could be jeopardized.

Boat protest

Survivors and relatives of the 51 people who died in the Marchioness pleasure boat disaster last summer will protest today about compensation outside the annual meeting in London of RMC, the parent company of the owners of the Bowbelle, the dredger involved in the collision.

Blasphemy plea

The British Muslim Action Front was yesterday refused leave by the Divisional Court to appeal to the House of Lords over its failure to have Mr Salman Rushdie, author of *The Satanic Verses*, and his publishers prosecuted under the blasphemy laws.

Aids tests urged for all inmates

PRISON officers called for special HIV units in jails yesterday and compulsory Aids tests on all prisoners.

Delegates at the Prison Officers' Association annual conference in Portsmouth defied the advice of their leaders and demanded immediate legislation to impose blood tests on every inmate. Mr Terry McLaren, Wandsworth branch secretary, said: "We have a responsibility to prevent and curtail the spread of HIV. We all know what goes on in double cells in prisons and unless we identify the risk groups we are contributing to the spread of Aids."

Mr Len Jackson, a delegate from Hindley Jail, Lancashire, opposed compulsory tests which "removed the right of the individual to accept or decline medical advice. Aids tests are already readily available within the prison service for any inmate who wishes to take one," he said.

Many prisoners inject illegal drugs and have sexual relations while in jail, and may be spreading the Aids virus into the general community, researchers report today (Thomson Prentice writes). The *British Medical Journal* tells of 50 drug abusers, including eight women, all of whom had been in prison at some time in the past eight years. The report says that 47 of them had taken at least one illicit drug while in custody, most using needles shared with other prisoners. Four of the men and one of the women had had sexual relations in prison.



Open and shut case: This skull watch, which was reputed to have belonged to Mary Queen of Scots, is on display at "The Art of the Master Watchmakers" exhibition at Garrard's the Jewellers in Regent Street, central London. Also on show are what are believed to be the smallest and the most expensive watches in the world



Scheme aims to bring 18,000 jobs and £1bn to Merseyside

By RONALD FAUX

REGENERATION plans for Merseyside, designed to create 18,000 jobs and attract up to £1 billion of private investment, were disclosed by the Merseyside Development Corporation yesterday.

The second stage of the corporation's work in the area involves further redevelopment of the Liverpool docks and a series of investments on the Wirral. The corporation believes the new jobs will come to the city as big corporations are encouraged to move away from the south-east and into Merseyside.

Mr Phillip Carter, the corporation's chairman, said at the programme's launch yesterday: "In the

1990s our policy will be to stimulate economic activity by attracting and encouraging the growth of new business and jobs. We must ensure that Merseysiders have the training and skills to take up these new opportunities or set-up their own businesses.

"We also aim to improve and enhance the environment throughout the area for the benefit of residents and visitors alike."

The Merseyside Development Corporation, which is government funded, was set up in 1981 and had its area trebled in size in 1988. The "second wave" plans will cover the Liverpool waterfront from Bootle to Otterspool, Birkenhead and New Brighton have been singled out for

special improvement with plans to return New Brighton to its Victorian splendour as a tourist resort.

The corporation envisages that 3,000 new homes will be built in the area with a combination of building programmes and warehouse conversions.

Dr John Ritchie, chief executive of the corporation, said the investment and jobs in the strategy were expected to appear over the next 10 years. "The figures do take your breath away but our confidence is based on what we know is in the pipeline, the level of development interest in central Merseyside and the substantial changes that are planned which have transformed the perception of Merseyside."

Emergency services made blunder after blunder when trying to fight an oil spill in the Mersey, a leaked document disclosed yesterday. Contact telephone numbers were wrong, contingency plans out of date and workers had no idea what to do, environment experts say.

As a result, more than 150 tonnes of thick Venezuelan oil was allowed to pour into the river on August 19 last year. Hundreds of birds died and thousands more were seriously injured after they became caught up in the oil, which was due to be made into bitumen for roads.

The oil burst from a tear in a 12-mile underwater pipeline from Shell UK's Tarmore oil terminal to its refinery at Stanlow in Ellesmere

Port, Cheshire. Earlier this year Shell was fined £1 million in the High Court for the pollution.

Yesterday a leaked copy of the Mersey Oil Spill Project Advisory Group's findings on the incident listed the blunders which worsened the effects of the spill.

The report recommends a beach clean-up manual be prepared to identify the estuary's most sensitive areas, regular checks on contingency plans and a new guidance plan for independent action groups.

After a massive clean-up of the beaches of South Devon, where tons of oil spilled after the tanker Rosebay was holed on May 12, have reopened in time for the Whitsun Bank Holiday.

Buying The Times overseas:
Australia \$2.75; Belgium £1.50; Canada \$2.50; France £1.50; Germany \$2.50; Greece £1.50; Hong Kong \$2.50; India £1.50; Japan \$2.50; Korea £1.50; Luxembourg \$2.50; Malaysia £1.50; Mexico \$2.50; New Zealand \$2.50; Norway £1.50; Pakistan \$2.50; Portugal £1.50; Singapore \$2.50; South Africa £1.50; Sweden \$2.50; Switzerland \$2.50; Taiwan £1.50; USA \$2.50.

'Mad hacker' bombarded university computers

By NICK NUTTALL, TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

A PART-TIME computer consultant who called himself "the mad hacker" damaged university computer discs during a six-month campaign of electronic vandalism directed from his bedroom, a court was told yesterday.

Nicholas Whiteley penetrated data bases at Hull and Bath universities and Queen Mary College London, replacing valuable information with schoolboy humour. He was caught when British Telecom set up a monitor at the London University computer centre.

Whiteley, aged 21, of Ascot Gardens, Enfield, north London, was convicted at Southwark Crown Court of damaging the discs, but cleared of damaging computer hardware. He was remanded in custody for two weeks for social reports.

The jury was told that Whiteley gained access to the university computers through JANET, the Joint Academic Network, which links about 130 universities, polytechnics and research councils whose computer telephone numbers are publicly available.

Dr Bob Cooper, director of JANET, which is based at the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory near Oxford, said the network was like getting on to the A1. "It is like a highway, an open network meant to encourage people to communicate. There are no restrictions on the system."

Depending on the level of

Solicitors may pay disgruntled clients

By FRANCES GIBB
LEGAL AFFAIRS
CORRESPONDENT

WIDER powers for the Law Society to deal with complaints against solicitors, including awards of up to £1,000 under a "small claims" compensation scheme, were proposed yesterday.

The move comes in a government amendment to the Courts and Legal Services Bill, which Lord Mackay of Clashfern, the Lord Chancellor, said was an important step forward in helping to resolve public grievances against solicitors. "This proposal provides a welcome extension to the Law Society's powers to deal with complaints against solicitors by enabling them to direct payment of compensation in appropriate cases," he said. The Lord Chancellor would have the power to vary the maximum amount of compensation by statutory order.

Besides giving the Law Society the right to make such awards, the government amendment would also enable the society to respond more effectively to complaints about the quality of a solicitor's work where the issue was not sufficiently serious to constitute professional misconduct.

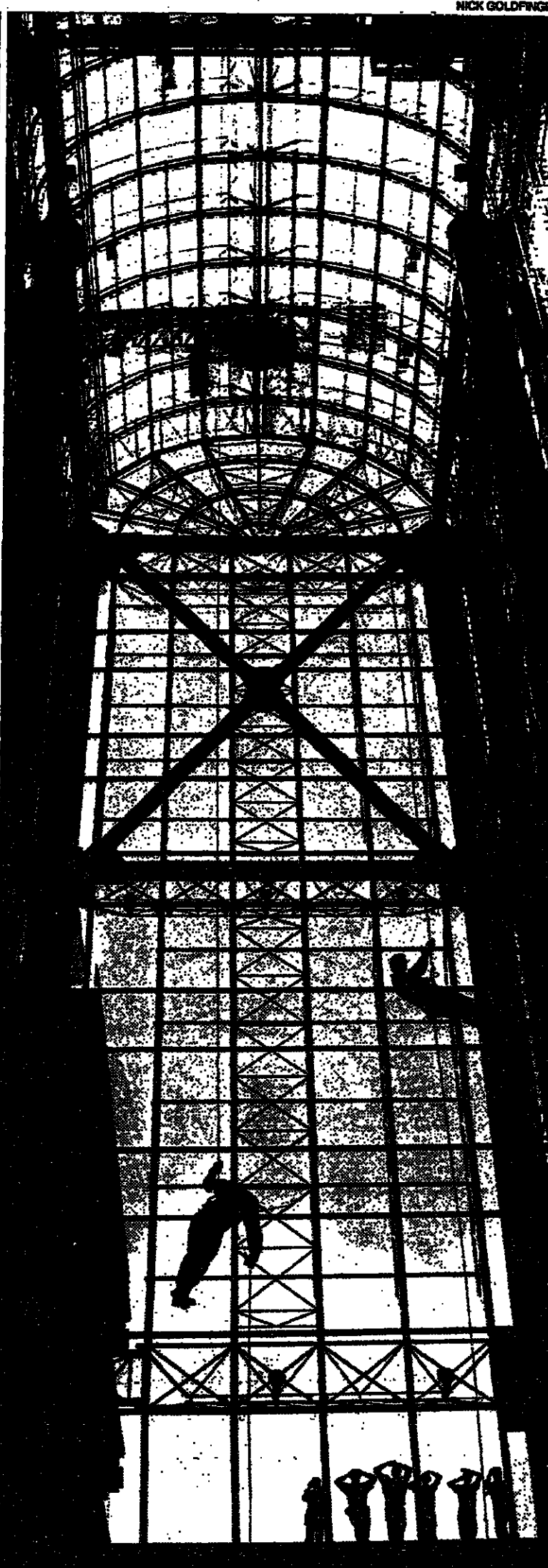
At the same time, the Solicitors' Complaints Bureau, which is funded by the Law Society and would administer the compensation scheme on its behalf, announced that it was extending a pilot scheme under which complainants discuss their problems with a local conciliator.

The bureau, which received 20,000 complaints last year, believes conciliation leads to quicker settlement of disputes. A quarter of all complaints are resolved that way and the plan is gradually to extend the local schemes nationwide.

The local conciliation scheme, introduced in East Anglia and Leeds at the end of last year, will tomorrow be extended to Hertfordshire and Essex. Conciliators are being recruited from the ranks of retired solicitors and those taking career breaks. The bureau said the object was to reduce the number of minor complaints handled at the bureau's London headquarters, leaving investigating officers there with more time to deal with cases of serious misconduct.

"Ideally the bureau would like to see more solicitors having their own in-house conciliation service. Complainants are encouraged first to approach their own solicitor and then the senior partner if this has failed to bring satisfaction. If these methods fail to provide the explanations they want, then they should complain to the bureau."

Typical complaints dealt with under conciliation procedures involve breakdown in communication between solicitor and client, failure by solicitors to reply to letters and telephone calls, and delays in dealing with clients' business.



Abseilers in action yesterday inside the Lloyd's Building in the City of London. Seventeen men and one woman abseiled 242ft down to the marble floor of the underwriting room to raise money for charity and set a new world record for indoor abseiling.

All are members of the Lloyd's Volunteer Force, a group of serving part-timers in the three Services whose civilian jobs are in Lloyd's. The money raised will go to the Royal Star and Garter Home for disabled ex-servicemen and women and the Lloyd's Volunteer Forces Fund which encourages new recruits into the reserve forces and gives awards to Lloyd's recruits. The target of £10,000 has been reached with more money coming in.

The team leader, Mr Ray Rock, a loss adjuster, aged 30, said: "It's what we call a free-space abseil. This means that the team made the rope descent without touching the sides of the building as they came down." They were covered by about 25 million worth of insurance.

Sponsor of RSC wants state to pay arts debts

By SIMON TAIT, ARTS CORRESPONDENT

THE sponsor of the Royal Shakespeare Company yesterday said the Government should pay off the deficits of all Britain's main arts companies to allow them to "carry on with their proper artistic function". The cost would be £13.4 million, according to preliminary estimates by the Arts Council last night.

Mr Ian Rushton, group chief executive of Royal Insurance, was announcing a new record sponsorship for a performing arts company in Britain — £2.1 million over three years for the RSC.

He warned the Government last October that private sponsors would not replace basic public funding and said the Government must increase its commitment: a month later his blunt message was answered by a 12 per cent increase in arts funding announced by Mr Richard Luce, Minister for the Arts.

Yesterday Mr Rushton said Royal Insurance was renewing its commitment to the company, and called on the Government to eliminate the debts at a stroke. He said it had never been Royal Insurance's intention to provide basic funding for the RSC; this should come from tickets and government subsidy.

The RSC, the Royal Opera House, the South Bank Centre, the English National Opera and the Royal National Theatre are all struggling with deficits. Last month Mr Jeremy Isaacs, general director of the Royal Opera House, announced that despite cuts it would have to budget for a second year of deficit, accumulating to £5.5 million. The announcement then prompted an angry response from Mr Peter Palumbo, chairman of the Arts Council.

Yesterday, he said: "We support Ian Rushton's view that the sponsorship should provide additional resources for the development of new projects and initiatives. Arts Council subsidy and box office must remain the RSC's core funding. We continue to press upon Government the need to increase the grant-in-aid sufficiently to enable us to put such important companies as the RSC on a secure financial footing."

Mr Rushton said: "I believe there is a special need at this time for a one-off payment by Government to clear this problem."

● Britain's most valuable book prize, the NCR award for non-fiction, has been won by Simon Schama for his monumental history *Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution*. Mr Schama, the London-born professor of history at Harvard University, received a cheque for £25,000 last night at an awards dinner at the Savoy Hotel, London.

Scrapie link to BSE queried

By MICHAEL HORNSBY
AGRICULTURE
CORRESPONDENT

A LEADING veterinary surgeon yesterday questioned the commonly accepted theory that the "mad cow" disease is passed to cattle through feed containing animal protein infected with scrapie, a closely related disease in sheep.

Mr Roger Eddy, a senior partner in a practice at Shepton Mallet, Somerset, specializing in dairy cattle, said he believed that bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) could have existed in cattle for years without being recognized.

"It is possible that the disease could have been spread by the feeding not of sheep waste, but cattle waste, to cattle. If that is correct, then the scrapie agent did not jump from sheep to cattle and there is less reason to fear it could jump from cattle to us," he said.

"In the 1960s and 1970s, I came across the odd case of nervous disorders in cows which, if I had seen them today, I think I would have diagnosed as BSE. I am right and BSE is not a new disease, the upsurge in cases since 1986 can be best explained by the feeding of meat and bone meal derived from infected cattle offal."

Mr Francis Anthony, chairman of the farm animals committee of the British Veterinary Association, said: "There has been talk about this possibility among vets for some time."

● Bovine spongiform encephalopathy may have occurred among cattle in America at least 25 years ago, but not been recognized, scientists at the US Agriculture Department report in *The Lancet* today.

● Britannia Airways has withdrawn beef from its menus.

Minister's opting-out decision upheld

By DAVID TYTLER
EDUCATION EDITOR

MOVES to prevent a school opting out of local authority control were described as "misconceived" by three judges who yesterday upheld a decision by Mr John MacGregor, Secretary of State for Education and Science, to allow Beechen Cliff School, Bath to run its own affairs.

They rejected the Avon County Council request to back its claim to regain control of the 800-pupil boy's comprehensive. The Court of Appeal judges also ruled that in Mr MacGregor had not acted "irrationally".

Lord Justice Gibson, sitting with Lords Justices Mustill and Nicholls, said the council's application for an order quashing the decision was misconceived "in so far as it asks the court to intervene in what is a dispute as to educational policy between Avon and the minister".

Mr MacGregor rejected the authority's proposals to turn Beechen Cliff into a sixth form college, but he was ordered by the court in February to reconsider his decision. Yesterday's decision followed a second challenge to his ruling. The judges refused the council leave to appeal and awarded costs to Mr MacGregor and the headmaster and governors of Beechen Cliff.

● Muslim children will be denied rights given to Christians and Jews in choosing schools for their children after a government decision to refuse financial backing for an Islamic school, it was claimed yesterday.

Mr MacGregor had refused to back the Islamic Primary School in Brent with £1 million of government money every year. The 95-pupil school founded by Mr Yusuf Islam, the former pop-singer Cat Stevens, had sought voluntary aided status as given to schools run by the Roman Catholics, the Church of England and the Jews. Mr MacGregor said: "I treat all applications alike."

Hunt widens for terrorist arms

By CRAIG SETON
and MARK SOUSTER

THE search for IRA safe houses and arms dumps spread to Scotland and the Midlands yesterday as police hunted the terrorist active service units responsible for the wave of bombings on mainland Britain during the past 21 months.

The campaign, mainly against soft military targets, has claimed 13 lives in 10 separate attacks, the most recent that of an army sergeant at a recruiting office in Wembley, north-west London. In the Midlands the inquiry into the IRA bombing of a Parachute Regiment barracks at Tern Hill, Shropshire, 15 months ago, was re-activated by a new hunt for an arms or explosive cache that could be hidden in the area.

The development came after police carried out a detailed search yesterday at an

isolated farmhouse just over the border in Staffordshire and only 10 miles from the Tern Hill barracks, where three bombs destroyed an accommodation block in February 1989.

Police with dogs trained to sniff out explosives and two helicopters equipped with thermal imaging equipment joined in the search at the farmhouse, known as Wilbrighton Hall, three miles from the village of Gnosall, near Stafford.

The Victorian building is used as a hall of residence for students from the Harper Adams agricultural college, five miles away at Edmond, near Newport, Shropshire.

The search was led by Staffordshire police, who called in officers from neighbouring West Mercia, the force that investigated the Tern Hill bombing. Scotland Yard's anti-terrorist branch was also alerted. Students

from the agricultural college were among the local people interviewed as potential witnesses at the time of last year's bombing. Some have been interviewed by West Mercia detectives.

The search at Wilbrighton Hall began on Tuesday after police received new information. West Mercia police said yesterday that it was making inquiries "which encompass any possible relationship with the Tern Hill bombing".

Detective Chief Superintendent Malcolm Bevington, head of Staffordshire CID, said yesterday that certain items had been removed from Wilbrighton Hall, but he confirmed they did not include arms or explosives.

He said the inquiry had links with the investigation into the Tern Hill bombing. A minute search was being conducted inside the farmhouse, in outbuildings and the grounds and in woodlands

near by. The IRA gang that carried out the bombing at the Tern Hill barracks fled after holding a guard at gunpoint. As it escaped across fields, the guard fired several shots at the gang before rousing 50 paratroopers who were asleep in the accommodation block.

They ran to safety minutes before three bombs exploded, demolishing the building. The IRA team hijacked a car from a house near the barracks. It was later abandoned.

In Scotland police began a search of Blackdyke Poultry Farm near Gretna, Green, Dumfries and Galloway. Local police confirmed that the Metropolitan Police had asked them to carry out inquiries in the area. Scotland Yard would not give details.

Mr John Gibson, managing director of Ross Breeders, who own the farm, said: "We are working in co-operation with the police and my lips are sealed."

Adverts ban 'not political'

DERBYSHIRE county councillors who voted to transfer advertisements for school job vacancies from *The Times Educational Supplement* to *The Guardian* "honestly believed" that their decision was for educational and not political reasons, counsel said in the High Court yesterday.

Several believed that *The Guardian* reached a wider audience than the *TES*, one including graduates and mothers considering returning to work, Mr Alan Newman, QC, for the council, said. It is contesting an attempt to have the decision declared unlawful.

The *TES*, News International Plc, Times Newspapers Ltd and Mrs Pauline Latham, a Derbyshire councillor, claim that the ban on advertising in the *TES* and an earlier ban by the ruling Labour group on advertising in all publications belonging to the same group, was unlawfully politically motivated because the council disliked two articles in *The Sunday Times* critical of Mr David Bookbinder, the council leader.

The plaintiffs claim that the *TES* is the main channel for advertising school job vacancies and that the ban would adversely affect children because it would seriously hinder the council's ability to recruit competent teachers. They are seeking a court order quashing the ban.

Mr Newman urged the court not to declare the ban unlawful. The councillors knew they had to make the *TES* decision on non-political grounds and had acted in the honest belief that their decision was based on educational reasons, he said.

The case continues today.

British quality of life 'among best in the world'

By DAVID YOUNG

THE quality of life in Britain, despite traffic jams, the poll tax and "mad cow" disease, is higher than most countries in the world including the United States and West Germany according to a report by the United Nations.

The UN has developed an Index of Human Development (IHD) which provides an accurate indicator of the quality of life in each of the 130 nations it has surveyed. It uses what it describes as the three essential elements of human life to establish a ranking: longevity, knowledge and living standards.

The report places Britain 10th out of the 130 nations in the quality of life league table. Japan tops the list, followed by Sweden, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Canada, Norway, Australia, France and Denmark. West

Germany is in 12th place and Ireland in 17th ahead of Austria, the United States and Israel. Niger in west central Africa is in last place.

The index was created for the UN Development Programme to help it target aid to needy countries. It goes much further than comparing wealth, taking in other measures of human well-being such as purchasing power, life expectancy and adult literacy.

Mr William H Draper, the administrator of the UN Development Programme, said yesterday: "We live in stirring times. An irresistible wave of human freedom is sweeping across many lands. Not only political systems but economic structures are beginning to change in countries where democratic forces had long been suppressed."

"People are beginning to take charge of their own destiny in these

countries. Unnecessary state interventions are on the wane. These are all reminders of the triumph of human spirit."

The report shows that high levels of human development can be achieved at even modest income levels, so long as people are placed at the centre of policies. It says that there is no automatic link between economic growth and human development and that some countries have been better than others at translating their economic growth into human development. The report says that Sri Lanka, Botswana, Malaysia, Chile, Colombia, Kenya, Jamaica and Zimbabwe have been successful in this while Pakistan, Brazil and Nigeria have failed.

Rich nations, it suggests, should offer more help in the shape of debt relief to the Third World countries,

which must make significant arms reductions if they are to improve the lives of their people. It says that in some Third World countries, money is poured into the military at the expense of basic necessities.

Mr Mahbub ul Haq, a UN special adviser, said yesterday: "In 1960, developing countries took 20 per cent of the global arms trade, in 1987 it was 75 per cent. That is why we believe strongly that the Third World should be brought into the superpower peace process." He called on the Soviet Union and the United States to consider three strategies to stop a Third World arms build-up.

"They should phase out military bases, replace military aid with economic aid and implement a ban or a code of conduct restraining arms shipments to developing countries," Mr Mahbub ul Haq said.

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MON (BANK HOLIDAY) 28 May 90, AT 11:30 a.m. - View from 10:30 a.m.

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Labour policy document

Priority for inflation control: quick entry into ERM

By ROBIN OAKLEY, POLITICAL EDITOR

THE Labour policy document, *Looking to the Future*, gives priority to the control of inflation and promises entry to the exchange-rate mechanism of the European monetary system "at the earliest opportunity". The party abandons past commitments to full employment, talking only of "the highest possible levels of skilled and rewarding employment".

Labour insists that there will be no "irresponsible dash for growth" and says of a Labour government: "We will not spend, nor will we promise to spend, more than Britain can afford". However, it suggests that balanced budgets or public sector debt repayment will end: "As a general principle, the Labour government will fund non-investment expenditure from current revenue."

ECONOMY & TAXATION

Where appropriate, however, we will borrow in order to finance long-term productive investment in the economy, for instance in transport, training, research and development and regional investment.

On taxation, Labour plans to change the structure of tax bands, starting the lower paid below 20 per cent and ending with a top rate ceiling of 50 per cent. Abolition of the ceiling on employees' National Insurance contributions would effectively make the top rate 59 per cent.

In a passage symptomatic of Labour's changed approach, the document says: "We welcome and endorse the efficiency and realism which markets can provide."

The difference between us and the Conservatives is not that they accept the market and we do not, but that we recognize the limits of the market and they do not. It welcomes the use of private sector capital in building up the transport infrastructure and pledges a more open approach to economic management, outlining the likely course of the economy in each Autumn Statement.

Entry to the ERM is listed first among the items comprising Labour's anti-inflation strategy. "In the private sector, membership of the ERM will create a new framework for wages and other costs. Management and trades unions will know that if their production costs rise faster than those of other European companies, they will not be able to compete successfully within the single market."

The document says that checking the expansion of credit, particularly with restraints on bank lending, can have a useful short-term effect. On public sector pay, it says that many state sector workers have seen their pay and conditions worsen markedly under the Conservatives. "We will halt this deterioration and develop fairer and more rational ways of setting pay and conditions for public sector employees."

Labour would, however, oppose any proposals for an unaccountable European Central Bank, for an independent Bank of England, for European Commission control of budgetary policy and for the ending of Britain's zero rating of value-added tax on food, fares, books and children's clothing. On taxation, the document says: "A buoyant economy will automatically increase public revenue."

Where there is extra growth, we believe that investment must have a greater priority than tax cuts. The first priority is the restoration of public investment and services. The party promises a distinction between investment expenditure (including training) and other government expenditure and says that private savings will be "mobilized" alongside public investment in new joint ventures.

Claiming that the Conservatives have gradually eliminated the progressive element in taxation, Labour says that the basic rate 25 per cent and 40 per cent top rate amount to a virtual flat-rate tax: only one taxpayer in 25 pays the higher rate of tax on any of their income. "Labour will restore fairness to our system of income tax by relating tax liability to the ability to pay."

The document also pledges Labour to introduce a national legal minimum hourly wage, starting at a level of 50 per cent of the mid-point of men's earnings (the median).

The document pledges Labour to work with both sides of industry to fill gaps in education and training, science and technology, transport and communications, backing for small firms, regional policy and export promotion, calling for a "skills revolution". A national training strategy will be set by an organization called Skills UK and help will go to sectoral training councils.

Looking to the Future (Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT; £2.50 to individuals, £10 to corporate bodies)

John Smith, page 12
Leading article, page 13

Restrictions on secondary picketing to be severe

By PHILIP WEBSTER, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Labour Party would restore the right to unions to take sympathy strike action but there would be severe restrictions on secondary picketing under the package drawn up by Mr Anthony Blair, Labour's spokesman on employment.

The industrial relations package is designed to lay to rest the charge frequently levelled by its opponents that Labour would be soft on the unions, a process started by its decision earlier this year to abandon support for the closed shop. It aims to bring Britain into line with its European partners.

The policy document explicitly accepts the role of the law in industrial relations and proposes the establishment of a new specialist Industrial Court, headed by a senior High Court judge, to deal with industrial disputes.

The court will have the full powers of enforcement and damages. Sequestration will remain but legislation will prevent the total sequestration of a union's income and assets in a way which prevents it going about its lawful business, such as paying benefits and representing its members.

The restoration of the right to secondary action is, perhaps, the most controversial area but Mr Blair has tightened the definition of the circumstances in which it will be allowed. Last year's review spoke of workers being allowed to take secondary action where they had a "genuine interest" in the dispute. Now the general principle will be to permit one group of employees to canvass support from another "where there is a direct interest between the two groups of an occupational or professional nature."

Describing the conditions, it says: "This would cover, for example, situations where the employer is doing the work of the primary employer or is otherwise an immediate customer or supplier, where the outcome of the primary dispute will necessarily or probably affect the terms and

UNIONS

conditions of the other employer's employees; and where corporate legal identity is used artificially to make sympathy action unlawful."

The document says that even the Conservatives have not sought to abolish the right to picket. Labour is, however, proposing strict controls, with no mass picketing or flying pickets, as Mr Blair said yesterday. The document says there will be a right to picket peacefully "in limited numbers, in accordance with a statutory code of practice, secondary picketing being permitted only where the second employer is directly assisting the first employer to frustrate the dispute."

Labour's new industrial court will be modelled on the existing employment appeal tribunal. The paper says: "The issue today is not 'law or no law' but 'fair or unfair law'. We must use the law to protect and empower people, giving them rights both as individuals and through their unions. And we need to make the law fair to make it last." Labour will introduce a new rule to ensure that where a court grants an interlocutory injunction a full hearing would have to follow immediately.

Ballots will be necessary for primary and secondary industrial action but where action is lawful individual employees are to be given the right not to be dismissed for that action.

Labour proposes that every employee has the right to certain basic minimum terms and conditions of employment protected by law under a new charter of rights. A basic contract of employment will guarantee every individual equal status, a minimum hourly wage, the right to safe working conditions and regular rest days, protection against discrimination and unfair dismissal, and rights to representation. It will ensure that employees do not face dismissal if they refuse to do dangerous work which is genuine and serious health and safety hazard.

Looking to the Future

A Dynamic Economy

A Decent Society

Strong in Europe

Labour

Conducting the debate: Mr Kinnock pointing out his party's aims from his podium at the policy review launch yesterday

New agencies in battle for better quality of life

By RICHARD FORD, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THREE new agencies would be created by an incoming Labour government to deal with environmental protection, consumer rights and food standards as part of party efforts to meet public anxiety over "quality of life" issues.

A Minister for Environmental Protection would be appointed as well as an Environmental Protection Executive with power to set pollution standards, control dangerous waste and create a system of "green" labelling.

The party says it would use prices, the market and "green taxes" as well as government intervention and regulation to safeguard the environment. The party pledges changes in road tax to favour fuel-efficient cars and those fitted with catalytic converters.

Tax subsidies on company cars would be phased out, flue gas scrubbers would be installed at coal-fired power stations and a system of energy labelling on appliances introduced. Labour would not invest in new nuclear power stations. The commercial trade in toxic waste would end and a Labour government would bring in a dog-registration scheme.

A Food Standards Agency would be set up to promote proper labelling, a healthy diet and to sponsor research to

ENVIRONMENT

raise standards. The policy document promises to transform the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food into a department whose primary focus was consumers rather than producers.

Creation of a Consumer Protection Commission would form part of Labour's efforts to provide the public with a better deal from the key utilities. It would have divisions for transport, energy, water and communications and would deal with consumer rights and monitor the performance of the utilities.

The commission will be able to inquire into pricing, service, quality and provision and would have the power to enforce decisions.

A Commons select committee will have new powers to publicly examine the performance of these industries, and call management to justify pricing and servicing decisions. Fuel and water disconnections would only take place with a court order and would not be allowed if there was a young child or elderly person in the household.

The policy document recommends a consumers' charter to ensure accurate information about purchases, tougher health and safety standards, comprehensive guarantees, simpler remedies when things go wrong, improved protection for consumers if a company goes bankrupt, compensation for injury from dangerous products and a statutory code of practice against misleading and offensive advertisements.

On housing, the party says high income tax relief on mortgages would end and every mortgage payer would get tax relief at the standard rate of income tax. In an attempt to end gazumping, Labour suggests introducing a system similar to that in Scotland, where a written offer on a property can be legally binding.

Constraints on local councils will be relaxed so that they can start building council houses and, though the party promises to keep a right to buy, the document says it will also make sure that houses sold are replaced by enough homes to rent.

Turning to the arts, the document says a Ministry for the Arts would be established with responsibility for promoting Britain's arts, and the service industries with them. The policy document also says that the ministry would be responsible for promoting broadcasting.

A high-speed rail network linked to the Channel tunnel, "greener" cars and moves aimed at switching traffic from roads to public transport lie at the heart of Labour's transport proposals (Nicholas Wood writes).

Property charge still not spelt out

THE poll tax will be replaced by a property tax linked to the ability to pay, but details will not be unveiled until after the Conservative review of the community charge.

That meant the plans would probably have to wait until July, Mr Bryan Gould, Labour's environment spokesman, said yesterday. There was no point in Labour putting up its proposals until it knew the result of the government review.

The document says a Labour government "will start on day one to sweep away the poll tax and replace it with our fairer alternative". That would be a modern property tax adjusted to take account of income which would be fair between individuals and fair between areas.

"The new system will substantially improve the help available to people on low incomes and will protect single or widowed, retired people living alone. People at the bottom end of the income scale will pay little or nothing."

The uniform business rate would be repealed and local authorities would be given back the right to establish a local business rate with rebates for small businesses and shops.

Labour emphasizes the need for councils to deliver high-quality, value-for-money rubbish collections, street cleaning, libraries, meals on wheels, home help and other services offering people choice.

Legislation on compulsory competitive tendering will be replaced. A "customer contract" will enable everyone to know what they are entitled to, how much the service costs and what to do if anything goes wrong. Every organization providing services would have to abide by its customer contract and that were broken there would be a sanction.

Powers to "tear" local authority spending would be abolished and a quality commission would replace the Audit Commission, introducing quality assurances, publishing guidelines and codes of practice covering service contracts and complaints procedures. There will be provision

POLL TAX

for at least some salaried, full-time councillors.

The document emphasizes Labour's commitment to the European Community, saying: "Britain's economic future is inseparable from the economic future of the EC as a whole... We believe that the EC must become both deeper and wider in its membership. It should also have a more substantial agenda and a greater ability to act."

Britain must play a "positive role" in shaping the future of the Community, and Labour has a "clear vision" of the changes it wants to see: high social standards, backing for the Social Charter, a European environmental charter guiding policy throughout the 12 member states, partnership, and assistance for poor regions.

Labour would negotiate British entry into the exchange-rate mechanism of the European Monetary System at "the earliest opportunity", although not at a sterling level that made industry uncompetitive or risked higher inflation.

While closer co-operation on monetary policy was inevitable and desirable, Labour "would oppose proposals for an all-powerful, but unaccountable central bank" as outlined in the Delors plan. The party is strongly against allowing the European Commission to control the budgetary policies of member countries.

European unity should not lead to a "European superstate". Instead, greater democratic accountability and scrutiny should be introduced by giving the European Parliament new powers to complement, not replace, national parliaments. It should be able to initiate proposals for legislation and exercise additional checks on decisions taken by the Council of Ministers by extending its brief to the social and environmental spheres.

The document also calls for membership of the EC to be extended to countries such as Austria and Norway and the new democracies of central and eastern Europe.

Switch to civil tasks to save jobs

PLANS to protect the jobs of workers in the defence industry by helping it diversify into civil manufacturing are set out in the defence policy section drawn up by the group headed by Mr Gerald Kaufman and Mr Martin O'Neill (Philip Webster writes).

Labour foresees an unquantified peace dividend arising from the effective collapse of the Warsaw Pact and the planned withdrawal of Soviet forces from most of Eastern Europe. It says that international negotiations can make possible reductions in United Kingdom defence spending "far beyond anything envisaged at last year's Labour Party conference."

Labour's defence analysts yesterday declined to put a figure on the possible cut and insisted that the document was not specifically referring to the suggested reduction of £5 billion implied by a motion, inspired by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, passed last year. It clearly expects big reductions because of the changed international climate.

Labour therefore proposes the setting up of a Defence Diversification Agency to spearhead the conversion from military to civil manufacturing. It will help workers, communities and companies affected by changes in defence

DEFENCE

policy; about 90,000 jobs in the defence industry have been lost over the past decade.

The agency will offer expert technical and marketing advice, channel recommendations on grants and aid, help in civil research and development and assist companies to tender for public contracts. The agency will operate under the Secretary of State for Defence, with representatives from appropriate government departments, unions and the defence industries, and will co-operate with the Department of Trade and Industry.

The main change in Labour's policy, the shift from unilateralism to negotiated nuclear disarmament, occurred last year. This year's document says the new policy "has been entirely vindicated by the events of the last year". Many of the objectives set last year have been achieved, it says, including the so-called "third zero" - the eventual destruction of nuclear weapons.

Labour says Nato will be needed for the foreseeable future. The West needs an organization to negotiate, implement and verify disarmament agreements; and Nato's existence makes it unnecessary for the EC to have any military role.

It says, however, that the role of Nato must be fundamentally reassessed; it should be political rather than military.

"Formidable hazards remain. Turmoil in the Soviet Union and elsewhere on the issue of nationalities threatens the stability upon which all other progress depends."

Reforms centre on devolution

SWEEPING reforms to local and national government aimed at strengthening accountability and devolving power are proposed in one of the most radical sections. County councils would be abolished and their functions divided between "most purpose" district authorities and regional assemblies.

Elected regional assemblies in England and a new elected body for London would have a strategic and co-ordinating role in such areas as economic planning, industrial policy and transport. Districts would be responsible for the delivery of most local services, including education. Those changes

REGIONS

would be mirrored by the creation of an elected Scottish Parliament, with powers to raise revenues, within the first year of Labour taking office. An elected all-Wales assembly would be set up in Cardiff.

The Prevention of Terrorism Act, strip-searching and the use of plastic bullets would be ended in Ulster. The Anglo-Irish Agreement, making the future of the province dependent on the wishes of the majority, would remain.

The "anachronism" of the House of Lords would be replaced by an elected second chamber with power to delay, for the lifetime of a Parliament, legislation conflicting with individual or constitutional rights.

New bodies to improve standards of teaching

By SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL REPORTER

TWO new education bodies would be set up by Labour to improve teaching standards, together with the creation of a national schools award, similar to the Queen's award to industry, for the best schools.

An Education Standards Council would work with school inspectors to measure a school's performance and work out targets with local authorities for increasing the number of teenagers staying on at school.

The policy document adopts the recommendation of the all-party Commons education select committee to set up a General Teachers' Council designated to give teaching a higher professional status. More teaching assistants would be employed as classroom helpers and nursery nurses to free qualified teachers for teaching.

Although the document does not spell out a new pay structure for teachers, it says that "as resources allow", teachers making a long-term commitment to the profession would be "properly rewarded". London teachers should also receive more help with housing costs.

A Labour government would give more support to parents with babies and young children by improving maternity and paternity leave, increasing the provision of nursery care and education, and improving child care facilities. It also advocates a "parent-

EDUCATION

school contract", setting out what the school and parents undertake to contribute.

Every child should develop an understanding of the different cultures and traditions that make up a multi-racial Britain, the document says. That same theme would be developed throughout a child's secondary education.

A Labour government would return opted-out schools and City Technology Colleges to local authority control. The document also pledges tighter controls on private schools and would phase out the assisted places scheme without affecting existing pupils. "At a time of great pressure on resources, and spare places in maintained schools, public funding of private schools cannot be justified," it says.

TRAINING

A TRAINING levy of at least 0.5 per cent of the payroll would be imposed by Labour on British firms. The party would also consider legislating to make it unlawful for school-leavers to go into jobs which offered no training.

However, the package of measures contributing to the "skills revolution" has been watered down since the 1989 policy review after consultations with industry. Instead of imposing the levy on all firms Labour would exempt small organizations and those

which already provide good training schemes. Half of Britain's workforce receives no training. Labour's aim is that every company should be an effective trainer of its workforce by the mid 1990s.

"But a purely voluntary approach will not work. We will therefore set employers (except very small organizations) an initial minimum of 0.5 per cent of their payroll to invest in high quality training to clear and agreed standards," the document says. It says that France has a minimum training levy of 1.2 per cent.

In England and Wales, Labour would reform the 80 employer-led Training and Enterprise Councils by including trade unionists, local councillors, educationalists, women and representatives of small firms. In Scotland, training arrangements would be left to the new Scottish Parliament.

TECs would be the local arm of a Labour government's Skills UK, which would draw up a national training strategy. "Its job will be to promote our training culture, identifying the barriers and seeking new ways to overcome them," the document says.

The training strategy would focus on improving the skills of young people. A Labour government would replace the Youth Training Scheme with a training guarantee lasting up to four years and leading to qualifications recognized throughout the European Community.

Pensions and child benefit will rise

THE old age pension will increase by at least £5 a week if Labour comes to power and Child benefit would rise substantially in the first year of government (Richard Ford writes).

The document admits, however, that Labour would not be able to implement all its health and social policies at once and that some might well take the lifetime of a Parliament. "Labour's priorities are clear and we believe they are widely shared. The three groups with the greatest needs are pensioners, children and people with disabilities," it says.

Under Labour, tax relief on private health policies taken out by pensioners or by their relatives on their behalf would end. The Party's assault on public subsidies to the private health care sector would also result in the ending of the "hidden subsidies" when doctors work privately in National Health Service time.

Free eye tests and dental checks would be brought back and Labour promises a

HEALTH

nationwide initiative to cut premature deaths from heart and lung disease. Stronger controls on tobacco advertising would be introduced.

Under Labour, a Patients' Charter would "guarantee" a personal service, reduced waiting lists and an effective appointments system within the National Health Service. Women would have the right to visit a woman's health centre and see a woman doctor. The policy of compulsory tendering in NHS services such as catering, laundry and domestic services would end.

However, the Party is cautious about the speed with which it can achieve its ambitions for the service. During the local election campaign Mr Robin Cook, Shadow Health Secretary, said the party would spend £3 billion over the lifetime of a parliament to restore NHS underfunding and meet the rising de-

mands of an ageing population. No such figure appears in the document published yesterday.

On Social Security, Labour would restore the link between pensions and earnings, and promises a minimum increase of £5 a week for a single person's pension and £8 for a married couple. A special addition to the pension would be introduced for those over 75.

Although the party wants everyone with a serious disability to receive a benefit, the documents admit that a start can only be made when resources allow.

It will introduce a proper carer's benefit for people who look after elderly, sick or disabled relatives and who often must give up work to do so.

A national personal pensions plan, building on the State Earnings Related Pension Scheme (SERPS), would be introduced based on an individual's 20 best years' earnings.

Industry as con group... Lack of... of kids... More...

Labour document: Reaction

Industry cautious as consumer groups seek details

By Staff Reporters

LABOUR'S policy review received a predictably mixed reaction last night with doctors, farmers and consumer groups demanding to know more details about the proposals.

Industry, however, awarded it qualified approval with the British Institute of Management even venturing to offer broad support for "the forward-looking policy on industrial relations".

Mr Peter Benton, the institute's director general, said he particularly welcomed Labour's plans to abandon the closed shop and to define the industrial relations framework in terms of individuals. "The overwhelming majority of managers support the individual's right not to be refused employment on the grounds of membership of a non-membership of a trade union," he said.

Labour's intention to retain strike ballots and elections for union officials were necessary to ensure unions were accountable to their members, he said, while proposals for employment legislation to encourage arbitration were also welcome.

However, the institute was concerned, Mr Benton added, on how a proposed training levy would be defined and monitored. "Training requires a carrot, not a stick. We would

like to see voluntary employer contributions to training rewarded with generous tax relief."

The Institute of Personnel Management warned the party last night that it considered further, extensive employment legislation to be inappropriate. Mr Brian Ware, its director general, said it was time both main parties called a halt to changes in employment laws and, instead, called on them to "concentrate on key issues which would help enterprises in the UK to raise productivity."

Mr Lilley said all political parties should recognize that most employers and workers do not turn to the law to settle disputes. "Britain's personnel practitioners have told the Government that the present Employment Bill is unnecessary," he said. "Now we say to the Labour Party that the time is inappropriate for more big changes in the field of employment law."

British Rail endorsed Labour's idea of "passenger charters" to ensure public transport reflected passenger needs, including standards covering safety, reliability, comfort and accessibility. However, a spokesman said: "It would no doubt be based on our existing code of practice for passenger travel, in-

troduced in 1985, which created a system of arbitration and compensation for customer complaints."

London Regional Transport said it already did all it can to meet passenger aspirations within the current "financial constraints."

The Trades Union Congress, which is still involved in internal discussions on labour law, declined to comment on the policy document and it is understood the movement's main policy-making body is divided on some aspects of the proposals.

The Confederation of British Industry also refused to respond, stating it had "well-established policies on the economy, employment and industrial issues."

Labour's proposals on farming and food came as little surprise. The proposal for an independent Food Standards Agency has long had the backing of the Consumers' Association and other watchdog groups concerned about the ability of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, as presently constituted, to protect the consumer interest.

In a cautious reaction, the National Farmers' Union said: "This is a broad reiteration of well-known Labour Party policy. The NFU is continuing to have talks about future policy with Labour's front-bench team. We certainly welcome the statement that farmers should have a role as managers of the countryside as well as producers of food."

Mr John Beishon, director of the Consumers' Association, said: "The Food Standards Agency and the Consumer Protection Commission are good ideas in principle, but everything will depend on what sort of powers they will have. A Food Standards Agency would serve little point unless it is completely independent of the Government."

The British Medical Association, meanwhile, welcomed Labour's plan to bring back free eye and dental checks and to apply stronger controls to tobacco advertising. However, it warned Labour against measures that could inhibit private practice and said that its plans would have to be backed by resources.

The Labour document says it will end the "hidden subsidies" when doctors work privately in National Health Service time. It also says that its long-term aim is to make the NHS so good that private practice would disappear.

Mr Paddy Ross, chairman of the BMA's consultants committee pointed out that the Government had just introduced new contracts spelling out fixed NHS commitments such as operating sessions but allowing doctors flexibility for other NHS work and private work. "There is no such thing as NHS time - as long as we do not do private work when we are supposed to be doing operating sessions. You cannot spell out a 9-5 day."

Police applaud Labour's plans

By Stewart Tindler
CRIME CORRESPONDENT

MR ROY Hattersley, the Shadow Home Secretary, yesterday unveiled Labour's policy for law and order to representatives of 125,000 police in a speech warmly applauded by the annual conference of the Police Federation in Scarborough.

A day after the conference greeted Mr David Waddington, the Home Secretary, in silence, Mr Hattersley was given a reception a minister might normally expect.

Yesterday, bouts of applause greeted a speech which unveiled Labour's blueprint and placed the party firmly behind the police in their dispute over the Government's decision to ignore arbitration on new housing allowances.

Mr Alan Eastwood, federation chairman, said after the speech that the blueprint would be carefully analysed. Officials privately welcomed many of the ideas but there were reservations over a number of proposals and some delegates were sceptical.

During the speech the conference applauded Labour plans to repossess institutions, such as the Forensic Science Service, if they are privatized and supported the party's intention to set up a licence authority for the private security industry. For years, Mr Hattersley said, Labour had opposed licensing because it would result in private staff doing work which was not theirs to do. Now those tasks were being done without licensing.

He was also opposed to security firms taking over the role of the police. At Felixstowe recently, the dock police had been replaced with an organization which included a woman who had worked at a check-out till and had received two weeks' training. "The idea she could perform the police officer's task is grotesque," he said.

Delegates also welcomed plans to speed up the complaints system, creating an independent investigation system and putting more effort into serious complaints rather than allowing over-concentration on minor infringements. Justice for policemen, Mr Hattersley said, had to be swift.

Delegates were silent as Mr Hattersley spoke of setting up a new appeals system allowing dubious convictions to be examined by a tribunal not made up solely of judges. Labour was thinking of cases such as the Guildford Four but Mr Hattersley said nothing would be done without discussions with the judiciary and the legal profession. "I believe a Home Secretary must have the right to put a case to a tribunal not exclusively made up of lawyers," he said.

Mr Hattersley attracted great support when he attacked the Government for turning down the proposals for housing allowances put forward after arbitration. "If this conference is angry it is not angry because it has asked for something and not been granted it but because something it already possesses is being taken away."



Mr Nigel Lawson, the former Chancellor, collecting in the City yesterday for the Royal Marsden cancer hospital's £25 million redevelopment appeal.

Thatcher disowns ethnic test remarks by Tebbit

By Quentin Cowdry, Home Affairs Correspondent

THE Prime Minister has publicly dissociated herself from the controversial claim made by Mr Norman Tebbit, former Conservative Party chairman, that some members of the ethnic minorities fail the "cricket test", it was disclosed yesterday.

Earlier this month, she wrote to the Organization of British Muslims saying she disagreed with Mr Tebbit's assertion that a useful test of the national loyalties of a non-white British citizen was whether he or she would cheer for England in a cricket match. Some Labour MPs and ethnic minority groups subsequently accused Mr Tebbit of racism.

In her letter, released by the organization, she said she felt sure Mr Tebbit had not intended to be insulting, especially in view of the "enormous contribution" that Asians had made to British life.

She added, however: "I do not agree with what he said and I am glad that you have written to Norman to let him know of your concerns." The letter was not marked confidential.

Yesterday, Mr Abdul Bahalim, the body's national secretary, said he was delighted to have received confirmation

that the Prime Minister disagreed with Mr Tebbit. He added: "It was interesting to see the accusation against the black community - perhaps fearing a violent reaction. He picked on the Asian community because, like some other commentators, he thinks we're a soft target."

The furor over the "cricket test" remark erupted last month when Mr Tebbit, discussing the issue of immigration, told the *Los Angeles Times* that a "real problem" was that some members of the ethnic minorities refused to see themselves as British first. During cricket matches some Britons of Asian extract, for example, did not know who to "cheer for", he said.

The Organization of British Muslims also released a copy of a letter, dated May 7, written by Mr Tebbit to Mr Bahalim in which the MP declined to apologize for the comment. Mr Bahalim is former national secretary of the Anglo Asian Conservative Society.

In the missive, Mr Tebbit, declares himself to be an "integrationist" who has no interest in repatriation or apartheid as a policy towards non-white British groups. But

he says the alternative policy places an onus on ethnic minorities to "integrate fully into the community". Clearly signalling his intention not to apologize, he says: "To expect loyalties with countries outside the state whose nationality one has adopted seems to me a mark of failure to integrate into that society."

"If we are to have black or brown or yellow British people, they must look forward with their adopted country, not backwards to their origins. Otherwise we will have in these islands foreign enclaves, not a United Kingdom."

Mr Bahalim, who has met Mrs Thatcher and other senior party officials on numerous occasions, said it was vital that the ethnic minorities were not made to feel like "parasites" or "unwanted children". He added: "Groups like the Muslims are a major asset who can help Britain build bridges with other countries and boost its prosperity."

The "cricket test" remark came in the wake of the failure of Mr Tebbit and 43 other Tory right-wingers to block a government Bill proposing the issuing of full British passports to 50,000 Hong Kong residents and their families.

Status of unwed couples reviewed

By Kerry Gill

THE Scottish Law Commission yesterday announced that it was to seek views on reforming the law concerning unmarried couples who live together as man and wife.

The commission has issued a consultation paper, *The Effects of Cohabitation in Private Law*, which asks whether either party should be able to apply for financial aid after a relationship ends, in a similar way to so-called "palimony" arrangements in the United States.

The paper gives the example of a woman who, unpaid, helps to build up a business owned by the man with whom she lives, but then the relationship breaks down.

If the couple was married, she would be able to claim compensation for any advantage enjoyed by her husband. However, if the couple was unmarried, the woman would have no statutory claim and might find it difficult to pursue her case under existing common law.

Similarly the commission asks whether one party can claim maintenance for the upkeep of their child, and also claim future financial help to share the economic burden equally between both parties.

At present, if one partner dies intestate the other has no right to any property. The commission asks where, if at all, a partner should appear in the list of those entitled to succeed on intestacy, but distinguishes between cohabitations of a long and short duration.

It says that more couples are now cohabiting without marrying. According to *Population Trends*, published last winter, about 900,000 men and women aged under 60 were cohabiting in 1986-1987 in Britain. However, living together is most common in south-east England and tends to become less common the further north one travels.

Dr Eric Clive, of the commission, said that public opinion in Scotland, measured in a recent poll by System Three, favoured more generous treatment of cohabitants in many circumstances. He agreed that opposition could be expected from church groups.

In the System Three poll 85 per cent of the sample questioned were in favour of allowing a woman, who had helped her partner in, say, a successful business venture, a statutory claim. In cases where a five-year relationship ended, 68 per cent were in favour of equal sharing of goods bought for the home by either of the cohabitants. More than three quarters would give the woman a claim for maintenance for herself if she had custody of a child born during the relationship.

The commission wants a response from interested members of the public and organizations by October. It is also seeking views on cohabitation contracts, insurance policies and occupancy rights when there is domestic violence between partners.

The Effects of Cohabitation in Private Law. (Published by the Scottish Law Commission, Causewayside, Edinburgh)

All student loans may be scrapped

By Douglas Broom, Education Reporter

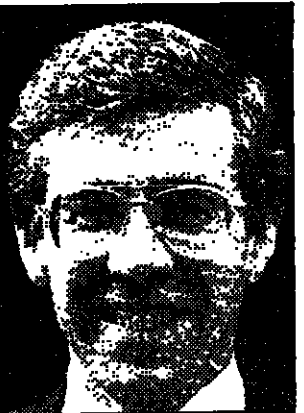
AN INCOMING Labour government would consider writing off all outstanding student loans as a first step to scrapping the Government's scheme for "student support".

Mr Jack Straw, the party's education spokesman, said it might be cheaper to write off loans than retain expensive machinery for collecting repayments. Ministers have predicted that up to 500,000 students in higher education will take up the offer of a £420 interest-free loan this year.

That would mean that at least £210 million would be outstanding in May 1991, a possible date for the next general election. If the poll was delayed until 1992 the figure would more than double. Mr Straw said a Labour government would wind up the Glasgow-based Student Loans Company which, set up by the present Government to run its loan scheme and which would cost £250 million a year to run.

"We would have to look at the costs of collection as against the cost of writing off the outstanding debt," he said. "If it was going to cost us more to collect them we would probably write them off."

Mr Straw's comments were welcomed by the National Union of Students. Its president, Miss Maeve Sherlock, said: "It is very pleasant to have the prospect of a govern-



Jack Straw: cheaper to write off student loans

Parliament

Lack of funds limits use of kidney 'wonder drug'

A "wonder drug" for kidney patients is not being prescribed by some regional health authorities because their budgets are already overstretched. Sir Michael McNair-Wilson (Newbury, C), President of the National Federation of Kidney Patient Associations, said during a short debate.

He told MPs: "I cannot stay silent on this matter. What is the point of creating wonder drugs if, when we have got them, we cannot afford to prescribe them?"

He said that after suffering kidney failure he had been a guinea pig in trials of the drug, Erythropoietin or EPO, which he had been told could give him back his haemoglobin, energy and colour.

"Today I would have found it hard to be a kidney patient not in receipt of the drug. I am one of the lucky ones."

About 1,500 of the 8,000 patients on dialysis needed EPO which was very expensive. His consultant in Oxford had only



funds enough for 50 per cent of those who could benefit. Elsewhere the story was too often the same.

"It is a heart-breaking message, as tough on a consultant who wants to prescribe as on the patient who knows by hearsay what he or she is missing."

He called on the Department of Health either to ensure part of the money going to regional health authorities specifically to meet the cost of the drug to be made available on prescription from the kidney patient's GP.

Mr Stephen Dorrell, Under Secretary of State for Health, said that the drug represented a tremendous advance in renal medicine. He was very much aware of the need to find a way to make it available.

But he did not accept the suggestion that this be achieved by "some form of central funding" of the particular need of a health authority for this drug.

He undertook to work with the regions and health authorities to ensure, so far as possible, that the drug was available. It was important that each region assessed carefully the clinical need that would arise for the drug within its own facilities and made appropriate plans to ensure the need was met.

Phone tap baffles manager

The tapping of the home telephone of one of British Telecom's acting managers in Scotland was bitterly criticized in the Commons yesterday by Mr Robin Cook (Livingston, Lab). The man was baffled by it, he said.

He explained that Mr T. McSherry, the acting manager of the Livingston exchange, experienced interference on his telephone and discovered a phone tap in a remote part of the exchange.

British Telecom said the device was in response to an Ofcom request to check telephone billing.

Mr McSherry had no criminal record and not the remotest link with a terrorist organization. There was the suspicion that it may have been an attempt to check on his soundness and loyalty before making his appointment permanent.

The problem was that Mr McSherry did not know to whom to complain.

There was a growing belief that most telephone tapping was now being done not by MI5 or Special Branch, but through the Government Communications Headquarters and the Foreign Office.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton, Under Secretary of State, Scottish Office, said that if Mr McSherry believed his telephone was being unlawfully tapped he should report it to the police.

The law provided for protection of the individual against unlawful interception, but the ability to tap was important in catching criminals, particularly those involved in subversion, terrorism or drug offences.

Houses rise

Both Houses of Parliament adjourned yesterday for the spring recess. The Lords will return on June 4 when they will debate the War Crimes Bill. The Commons returns a day later.

On June 6 MPs will debate an Opposition motion on the welfare of children followed by a debate on an order on teachers' pay. The order will allow those local authorities which have not already paid the latest increase to do so by July.

Conservative MPs are seeking an early debate on Labour's policy document published yesterday.

More homes predicted

A massive expansion of housing association homes was predicted yesterday despite the "revolution" in the financial arrangements.

During a short debate in the Commons, Mr Christopher Chepe, Under Secretary of State for the Environment, said that temporary difficulties arising from changes in financial arrangements would soon be over and the housing association movement could look forward to many years of expansion and prosperity.

Over the next two years, more than 50,000 new homes were

expected to be completed for occupation by people in housing need and 41,000 units were between approval and completion.

The number of planned scheme approvals would have to be cut back sharply this year but this would have little impact upon completions. Overall, they were still on course for massive expansion.

If anything had gone wrong, it was that the associations had responded to the changes even more quickly and impressively than the Government had expected.

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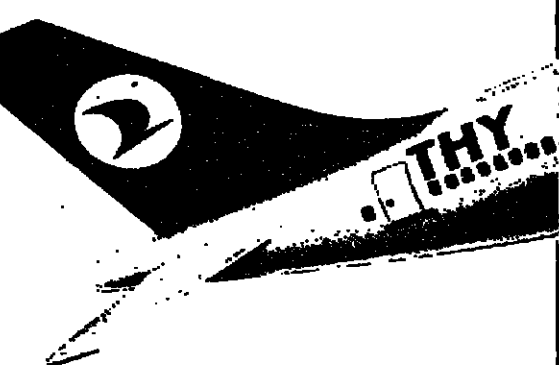
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Childbirth death report criticizes hospital doctors

By THOMSON PRENTICE, SCIENCE CORRESPONDENT

HOSPITAL doctors and labour ward staff are strongly criticized in a report today for mistakes and misjudgements which contributed to the deaths of 19 babies, brain damage to 45 others, and the deaths of six mothers during or after childbirth.

The tragedies occurred in a number of British hospitals over a five-year period, and were catalogued by the Medical Protection Society, which represents doctors in negligence claims.

Although more than three million babies were born during the same period and most births were accident free, the tragedies should not be dismissed as isolated incidents, the report in the *British Medical Journal* says. The errors listed include inadequate foetal heart monitoring, the wrong use of forceps in deliveries, and poor supervision by senior staff of their junior colleagues. In 20 cases, the seniors failed to come to the labour ward when asked for help.

Two of the women died of a ruptured uterus, which in one case was not diagnosed for three days, although the

woman was seen by several doctors and given blood transfusions.

Another died of septicaemia, and a fourth of toxic shock. Two other women died after hysterectomies performed on them as a result of severe lacerations of the uterus they sustained during delivery.

Twelve of the babies were stillborn and seven died within a week. Five deaths were due to lack of oxygen during birth, five were caused by brain damage and one was due to respiratory distress syndrome. In eight cases, the cause was not reported.

The study by two psychologists at University College London, says five infant deaths and one maternal death were directly attributable to the misuse of forceps during deliveries.

In 14 cases signs of foetal distress during labour went unnoticed or were ignored by doctors or nurses, and in many others there were flaws in the reading or use of monitoring equipment. In 11 cases no electronic monitoring of the baby was conducted.

The report strongly criti-

cizes senior doctors for their failure in 20 cases to come to the labour ward when contacted by junior colleagues. "There seems to be inadequate supervision of doctors in the labour ward," the report says.

"The cases in this series could be dismissed as isolated incidents from which little can be learnt," the report concludes. "We believe, however, that they reflect more general problems, namely concerning the ability of junior doctors to interpret foetal heart traces accurately, their ability to use forceps, and the participation of senior staff in running a labour ward and delivery suite."

● Allergic reactions to peanuts can be fatal to asthma sufferers, doctors warn in the *British Medical Journal* today.

The doctors at University College Hospital, central London, describe two patients, both young men, who died from heart attacks after inadvertently eating the nuts in meals. A third man and a boy recovered. All four were known to have allergic reactions to nuts and had a history of signs of asthma.

Russians line up to check on Greenham



Two Soviet inspection teams queue to gain entry to the RAF base at Greenham Common, Berkshire. The Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces Treaty inspectors will check the accuracy of the bi-annual exchange of weapons data between the United States and the Soviet Union.

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NHS financial management is weak, MPs say

By SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL REPORTER

MEASURES to deal with financial difficulties in the National Health Service such as ward closures and the late payment of bills are affecting patients and storing up worse problems for the future, according to MPs.

In one of its most hard-hitting reports this session, the Commons public accounts committee concluded that financial management of many parts of the NHS's £12 billion annual budget remains "weak". It says the shortcomings could threaten the Government's NHS reforms, which will require health officials to be much more cost-conscious.

"The management executive face formidable problems: and it will take a strong lead from the centre backed by vigorous action both to eliminate present weaknesses and to make the new arrangements work as intended."

Since 1987 many health authorities have faced serious financial difficulties. In spite of efforts to improve budgeting, the committee found that by May 1989 health authorities were committed to spending £50 million over budget.

"As a consequence of their financial difficulties, some districts took emergency measures in 1987/8 of a stop-go

nature. These included ward closures and deferral or cancellation of service developments and estate maintenance."

The report added: "The Management Executive admitted that similar problems had continued in 1988/89 and 1989/90. They attributed these to failure by some managers to have the right kind of grip on their affairs and agreed that crisis management of this kind was unacceptable."

It also said that firm action must be taken against health authorities which delay paying creditors for months to try to balance the books. A code requires bills to be paid within six weeks.

"As well as increasing future financial pressure on authorities, it may rebound in the form of higher prices or alienation of suppliers," the report said.

The committee suggests more penetrating and random checks on health authorities' budgets together with strict targets to try to prevent overspending.

Management in the National Health Service (House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts 16th report, Stationery Office, £7.15 net)

Rail buff, 13, wins 125,000-mile award

A BOY aged 13 who clocked up 125,386 miles by train last year became a British Rail young Super Traveller of the Year yesterday.

He achieved the highest mileage in the eight years of the competition organized by Rail Riders, British Rail's club for people aged 5 to 15. Jonathan Carter, from Whitkirk, Leeds, West Yorkshire, won the 11 to 15 age group and was previously a super traveller in 1985. He has travelled over half a million miles by train in the past seven years.

His favourite journey is along the Devon and Cornwall coast. His verdict on British Rail's service? "The InterCity

is quite good but the provincial service is not so good."

This weekend, with his father Ronald, an accountant with the Yorkshire Electricity Board, Jonathan will attempt to beat the British record for travelling to the four extremities of the land: from Thurso, to Arisaig, Lowestoft and Penzance. The record stands at 48 hours and 15 minutes.

The super traveller in the eight to 10 age group was Clare Binns aged eight from Dewsbury, West Yorkshire, with 31,745 miles. Her younger brother Thomas, aged five, took the title for the five to seven age group with 30,225 miles.



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1990 11 1550

Israel will not allow UN observers in territories

From a CORRESPONDENT IN JERUSALEM

MR MOSHE Arens, the Israeli Foreign Minister, said yesterday that United Nations observers would not be allowed in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, even if such a plan were approved by the UN Security Council.

"I hope that this is not going to take place," Mr Arens said. "Israel would not accept UN observers on territory under Israeli control." He was reacting to the surprise announcement a day earlier that the United States would consider supporting the dispatch of observers to the occupied territories. Mr James Baker, the Secretary of State, said in Washington on Wednesday that "we would be prepared to discuss the question of a UN observer team, if that indeed does come up at the Security Council session".

The council is scheduled to meet in Geneva today to hear an appeal by Mr Yasser Arafat, the chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization, for protection for the 1.7 million Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Fifteen Palestinians from the territories have been killed by Israeli security forces since Sunday, when an Israeli man fired on Gaza workers, killing seven and wounding 11. Israel's handling of the disturbances has drawn widespread international criticism.

Mr Baker's announcement was the latest in a series of increasing trouble over the United States' traditionally strong relations with the Jewish state. In recent weeks the Administration has been critical of Israel's policy of settling more Jews in the occupied territories and of its failure to get peace talks under way. Mr Arens said he did not feel relations with the United States were deteriorating. "There are disagreements even among the closest of partners, and we certainly have some disagreements with the United States at the

present time. But in my view I would not characterize the situation as deterioration." He said Israel hoped to convince the United States to veto any Security Council resolution on sending an observer force.

Israel has insisted that its actions in the territories are monitored by independent groups, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross and by reporters, and that UN observers would be unnecessary and a violation of Israel's sovereignty.

"We feel there is no justification for the stationing of UN observers in areas that are legitimately under Israeli control," Mr Arens said. "I am very seriously concerned that they would not contribute to tranquility in the area and that those people who incite the violence in the area ... would feel encouraged."

He commended the Army's performance this week, saying it had "succeeded in restoring a reasonable measure of tranquility using a minimum of force". The latest victims were a boy, aged 15, shot dead in an overnight clash with troops in the West Bank town of Ramallah, and an eight-year-old boy who died of a head wound on Wednesday after he was shot from a police car in the Gaza village of Bani Suheila, Arab reports said. The Army confirmed both deaths but said it was investigating the circumstances.

Mr Arens said Israel was also concerned about the Arab summit in Baghdad next Monday. Arab leaders had expressed concern about the immigration of Soviet Jews to Israel, but Mr Arens claimed that "the numbers are insignificant". The settlement of Soviet Jews in the territories was "really a red herring".

● GENEVA: UN officials say no resolution on the territories is expected to emerge from today's Security Council session, nor is any draft being discussed, at least not publicly (Alan McGregor writes).



Police raising their riot shields, above, to protect Rafael de Paula, below, after he refused to fight a timid bull

Fear defeats a top bullfighter

From HARRY DEBELIUS IN MADRID

A TIMID bull and a fearful torero faced each other briefly across the sands of Madrid's monumental bullring.

Rafael de Paula, one of Spain's leading bullfighters, watched his assistants lead the great black bull across the ring, waving their capes before it. In one lunge, the animal hooked hard to the right and slashed the pink-and-yellow cloth of a cape. This was the first of two bulls he was to kill on Wednesday in an important fight of the month-long San Isidro series.

Two of Señor de Paula's team failed to place pairs of banderillas in the beast's hump. The bull, bred to fight nobly in the ring, turned and ran from a mounted picador who tried to lance it.

"That bull wants to kill me," the gypsy bullfighter muttered to fellow toreros as he eyed the animal. He stood immobile by the *banderillero*,

the fence surrounding the ring, watching warily in case the bull should begin its charge. Five minutes passed, and the trumpets blared a warning that Señor de Paula must fight the bull. Five minutes more and another trumpet blast, but he stood still.

On the third blast, he turned and walked, head down, into the narrow alleyway behind the *banderillero*.

Around the arena the crowd whistled and jeered. A rain of cushions flew through the air as the *aficionados* made their displeasure plain. Señor de Paula, who has had similar bouts with fear in the past, was escorted out of the arena by police to face possible disciplinary charges by the president, or chief umpire, of the fight.

Across the ring, attendants drove a pair of steers out to meet and calm the bull, then manoeuvred it into the corral.



Its fate is more certain. It was caged and cannot legally be fought again. The animal will not be let out to pasture but is destined to die in a slaughterhouse.

Señor de Paula later retrieved some of his honour. Braving jeers and whistles, which were not as lethal as the horns of his first enemy, he returned to fight his second

bull, which he dispatched quickly and without ceremony. When a bullfighter fails to kill the bull, he usually has trouble collecting his fee. He may also be fined or jailed, depending on the recommendation of the president of the fight. The president has said he will recommend punishment for the bullfighter who was afraid to fight.

Bush extends favoured trade status for China

From MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT George Bush announced yesterday that he was extending China's preferential trading status with the US for one year, despite Peking's continuing "human rights excesses".

Staunchly defending a decision that infuriated many congressmen, he said that he had had to weigh "our impulse to lash out in outrage" against "a sober assessment of our nation's long-term interests".

He emphasized that he was not condoning last June's Tiananmen Square massacre or Peking's subsequent conduct; the few steps it had taken towards liberalization were "far from adequate".

He argued instead that maintaining commercial contacts and keeping open channels of communication were the best ways to help the Chinese reform movement, and that that course had been urged on him by Chinese students and intellectuals via the American ambassador to Peking.

The decision was not a "reward", he said. "It should send no message other than isolation is bad and economic involvement is good."

More prosaically, Mr Bush pointed out that not renewing China's most favoured nation trading status would cause a dramatic slump in America's \$6 billion (£3.5 billion) exports to China each year, leading to big job losses in the US aircraft, timber, chemical and agricultural industries.

The Chinese people themselves would be hurt. Hong Kong would also be "an innocent victim of our dispute with Beijing (Peking) - 20,000 jobs and \$10 billion are lost in a colony that is a model of free enterprise spirit".

China exported around \$12 billion of goods to the US last year, about \$8.5 billion of them via Hong Kong. Loss of most favoured nation status would have meant that the goods attracted tariffs in excess of 50 per cent instead of the present 8.8 per cent average, and experts estimated that Chinese exports could have slumped by up to \$10 billion.

US businessmen and Hong Kong government representatives had lobbied the Administration intensely.

On Capitol Hill, however, many congressmen have lost patience with the Administration's conciliatory policy towards Peking and its failure to adopt much tougher reprisals in the wake of Tiananmen Square. They were particularly outraged by the disclosure that Mr Bush had twice covertly sent emissaries to

Peking in the months after the massacre. Despite those overtures, Peking has only marginally eased its hardline stance, and even Mr Bush, a former envoy to Peking who formulates his own China policy, has confessed his own disappointment.

Prior to the President's announcement, which was widely forecast, Mr George Mitchell, the Senate majority leader, had denounced Mr Bush's conciliatory policy towards China as "a failure that is clear and complete", saying that renewal of most favoured nation trading status would "compound that failure".

Democrats and some Republicans pledged they would try to block renewal of China's trading status on Capitol Hill. But even if they are able to muster a simple majority, it is thought unlikely that they could command the two-thirds majority that would be necessary to override a presidential veto.

● TOKYO: The Goddess of Democracy, the French-based radio ship which planned to broadcast pro-democracy messages into China last night abandoned its mission after receiving a hostile reception at almost every turn in Asia (Joe Joseph writes).

The ship, which is still in Taiwan, has been turned away from Hong Kong, made welcome in Taiwan, and was told on Wednesday by the Japanese Government that it would not be welcome in Japan if it planned to broadcast in international waters.

The Goddess of Democracy, which had been hoping to beam pro-democracy messages to China in time for the first anniversary on June 4 of the Tiananmen Square massacre, wanted to kit itself out with a radio transmitter in Japan.

Faced with such a wall of opposition, the organizers decided to give up. The ship will stay in Taiwan and the crew will fly back to Paris.

M Pascal Dupont, one of the mission's key organizers, said last night: "From Hong Kong, to Taiwan, to Japan they all had the same line, so we dropped the project. We're not sure a big organization. We are not able to fight."

The Goddess of Democracy's fate was sealed after M Dupont telephoned Paris to discuss the catalogue of obstacles with M Christophe Nick, the project's main organizer. "Christophe was willing to go on," M Dupont said, "but he saw it was more like Don Quixote trying to fight the windmills."

Tide of trouble engulfs Husain

From RICHARD BEESTON IN AMMAN

WERE it not for the Jordanian riot police in their distinctive dark blue armoured vehicles, the scene at the Daga refugee camp would be familiar to any Palestinian across the Jordan river in the Israeli-occupied territories.

The squalid concrete skyline is dominated by black flags of mourning strapped to anything from television aerials to overhead cables. Burnt-out tyres and piles of stones mark the access roads into the 75,000-strong camp, and teenage boys scout the dusty streets for the next sign of trouble.

What began in Israel on Sunday as the murder of seven Palestinians by a deranged former Israeli soldier has unleashed a violent backlash which foreign observers and Jordanians admit can only get worse. Throughout Jordan this week tens of thousands of Palestinians, who make up 60 per cent of the population, have marched, clashed with police and destroyed property in an eruption that has left at least three dead and scores more injured.

On Monday nine French tourists and a Jordanian photographer were injured when an armed Palestinian attacked a tourist bus in central Amman. Armed paramilitary police now keep guard outside international hotels after marchers rampaged through the Marriott Hotel's car park and then attempted to march on the American Embassy before being turned back by the authorities.

Yesterday the Government vowed that it would clamp

down on the disturbances, and Major-General Fadel Ali, the police chief, said that all future demonstrations in the country would have to be approved by the authorities and that organizers would be held responsible for the conduct of participants. His announcement will, however, do little to ease fears among King Husain's Western supporters, who see him struggling with chronic economic and political problems.

"There were many strands to this week's disturbances, but the country's very serious economic situation must be put at the top of the list," one diplomat said. Jordan is burdened with a \$5 billion foreign debt, widespread unemployment and a state sector which employs about half of the indigent workforce.

King Husain is committed to a programme of democratization, but the reforms have led to sweeping gains by the fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood, which now controls a third of the seats in Parliament. Islamic zeal, indeed, was a recurring theme of this week's demonstrations, with attacks on breweries, restaurants and banks in Zarga, the second city.

The one political avenue which could bolster the Government would be progress on the settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict, but here too King Husain has found the way blocked so that, as he celebrates the 44th anniversary of Jordan's independence from Britain today, he will have to come to terms with the fact that his plight is likely to worsen before it improves.



MISS Benazir Bhutto, the Pakistani Prime Minister, addressing a press conference in Islamabad yesterday after her return from a marathon diplomatic tour seeking support for her Government's stand on Kashmir. She flatly rejected an independent Kashmir as a solution to Pakistan's dispute with India over the

region (Reuters reports from Islamabad). "If there is a proposal for an independent (Kashmir) state, it could have very dangerous consequences for the sub-continent. It could trigger a Balkanization of the region," she said in the strongest denunciation of the idea by a Pakistani leader since the present Kashmir revolt began.

Graduates clean boss's boots to learn loyalty

From JOE JOSEPH IN TOKYO

IMAGINE if a British graduate from a top university had landed a job in a blue-chip British bank - then had to spend the first week polishing the bank's brass nameplate. In Japan, this year's crop of new graduates have just begun their working lives with a bizarre set of induction rituals that, as it happens, might rank as one of the cushier career starts.

Japanese graduates, even from the premier Tokyo University, have been spending part of the past month cleaning lavatories, polishing their bosses' shoes, running marathons, and doing SAS-style training. Some of these million or so new corporate foot soldiers have had a less strenuous time meditating in temples, all in preparation for jobs sitting behind desks.

Personnel managers seeking to hire young, mostly male graduates, are looking for "blank sheets of paper", and initiation rites are designed to instil discipline, loyalty and camaraderie among colleagues who are likely to remain together for the next 40 years or so.

As many new recruits also live in company dormitories and spend their evenings

drinking together, this period is also a time for learning the important Japanese art of working by consensus.

Whom you work for - and the company emblem is there in your buttonhole for everyone to envy - is generally more important than what you do there. Ask a Westerner what he does for a living and he might answer "public relations" or "architect"; ask a Japanese and he will give you the name of his company.

In Japan's subtly hierarchical society, the name of an employer says more about a man than cash ever can. Just how important it is to bag a job with the "right" company is shown by the willingness of new recruits to stomach the bizarre training sessions, even though a severe labour shortage has given prized graduates their pick of jobs.

Among the unlicker novices, perhaps, were those at Dusk, a big cleaning company which for the past 30 years has made its new workers begin by cleaning the lavatories. Mr Akira Nishigaki, in Dusk's personnel department, says it helps newcomers to learn the pleasure of serving the public.

At Mitsubishi Electric, the

recruits had to run a 12.5-mile course to learn the importance of seeing a task through.

At Ito-Yokado, a supermarket chain that runs Seven-Eleven convenience stores, trainees stay in the car park well after dark practising their bowing and learning the company song "Soaring into the Future" ("Hand in hand, my friends and I soar into the world with great hope... I-Y Group, tomorrow is dawning, I-Y Group, our pride").

Some managers are willing to join in the fun. At Columbus, a shoe polish company, executives clean the footwear of trainees, who then return the favour. "It is the best way to foster their love for our company and to communicate with each other," a director explained.

● Guarded apology: Emperor Akihito of Japan last night voiced his "deepest regret" for Japan's colonization of the Korean peninsula (Our Foreign Staff writes). The apology was delivered at a banquet for President Roh of South Korea who began a three-day visit yesterday.

In Seoul, radical students protesting against Mr Roh's visit set light to Japanese flags and fire-bombed police.

Prisoner's life support turned off

Madrid - Doctors yesterday switched off a life-support system attached to Juan Manuel Sevillano, a jailed left-wing guerrilla who is critically ill after a hunger strike.

Sevillano, jailed for 24 years in 1986 for belonging to the Grapo organization, had suffered a heart attack. About 40 other Grapo prisoners are on hunger strike. (Reuters)

Killer jailed

Lisbon - Carlos Barros, aged 25, was jailed for 15 years for murdering Victoria Thomas, a British woman, near Cascais last July. (Reuters)

Army refuge

Dhaka - About 1,500 tribespeople from the Chittagong Hill Tracts took shelter at military barracks after Shanti Bahini guerrillas burned their homes. (Reuters)

Ortega order

Managua - Señor Daniel Ortega, the former Nicaraguan President, has been given until today to demolish walls around his house which are disrupting traffic. (Reuters)

Drug seizure

Mexico City - Police seized more than a tonne of cocaine and 14 tonnes of marijuana after a shoot-out in the town of Agua Prieta, where a tunnel used to smuggle drugs across the US border was discovered. (AP)

Burma coverage

Bangkok - Burma's embassy here said foreign journalists would be allowed into the country to cover Sunday's general elections. (AFP)

Le Pen riposte

Paris - M. Jean-Marie Le Pen, the right-wing French leader, condemned as scandalous a court's award of one franc (11p) in damages against him for calling the Holocaust "a detail". (AFP)

Turkey denial

Ankara - Mr Ali Bozer, the Turkish Foreign Minister, denied that Ankara would sell river water to Israel.

California TV station sues for right to screen executions

From JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

A SAN Francisco television station is hoping to bring death into the living room by televising executions. KQED, a non-profit educational station, has sued California's Governor and the state prison authorities to allow it to broadcast the final moments of Death Row inmates to TV viewers.

"There are a lot of things in the world that are not pretty to look at," Mr Michael Schwarz, director of the station's current affairs department and originator of the idea, said. "But it is our job as journalists to tell people what is going on. There is no more important public policy issue at the moment in this state than the death penalty," he said. The lawsuit, filed in a federal court in San Francisco,

comes in the middle of an election campaign for state Governor in which capital punishment has become a central issue.

Ms Dianne Feinstein, San Francisco's former mayor and a candidate for the Democratic Party nomination, has seen her popularity soar 29 percentage points in the last two months largely because of her outspoken support for the death penalty.

The issue came to the fore in April as California prepared to execute its first convict in 23 years, the murderer Robert Alton Harris. KQED requested and was denied permission to videotape his death for the public's edification. Barely 12 hours before it was due to take place, the execution was postponed. The station then decided to mount a full-scale court challenge

to state regulations barring television coverage, arguing that the ban was unconstitutional.

California law requires that certain officials and at least 12 "reputable citizens" be invited to the gas chamber at San Quentin prison to witness any execution. It has also been customary to allow in about 14 journalists. At California's last execution in 1967, reporters were allowed to take notes and draw sketches as they witnessed the death of Aaron Mitchell. But they were forbidden to use cameras.

KQED's suit argues that technology has changed and television cameras are more mobile and compact and no longer need special lighting. The station says other aspects of the criminal justice system, including court proceedings, are televised, and executions,

the most important single act, should be treated in the same way.

Its cause has won backing both from advocates of capital punishment, who say television coverage will heighten its deterrent effect, and opponents of the death penalty, who expect the public to find the spectacle repellent.

For reasons of propriety rather than law - because a condemned man would seem to have few rights - KQED is asking the court to force the authorities to allow it to film executions only if the prisoner does not object. Its lawyers say it is not known whether Harris would object to having his death beamed to households across the country.

Mr Schwarz vehemently denies any interest in increasing his ratings, making clear that KQED is not in competition with commercial stations. The channel would hold executions for broadcast until late at night. But he is candid about the possibility of commercial stations exploiting any new right to televise executions to provide sensational coverage for their viewers. "I doubt we would be first on the air with it," he said.

A taste of what could be expected came last year when Ted Bundy, the serial killer, died in Florida's electric chair. Crowds outside cheered as the 2,000-volt shock seared through him and citizens all over the state turned off electric appliances to help the charge. Photographs of his corpse were published in a tabloid magazine.

With 2,300 people already on Death Row in America and some 270 joining it every year, televised executions, if allowed, could become an important element of future programming. A blood-thirsty public is unlikely to find its hopes disappointed. An execution in Florida earlier this month, for example, took three jolts of electricity.

The prisoner was pronounced dead only six minutes after the first shock. The official witnesses said flames and sparks flew from the electrodes on his head and ashes fell on his shoulders.

Perhaps the best-known proponent of televising executions is the American television anchorman Sam Donaldson, who opposes capital punishment. "I think it's a good idea that we televise executions because it is a matter of public policy," he said. "That is what we do and people should see how the policy is carried out."

No market for bartered jam in tomorrow's Comecon

FROM ROGER BOYES
IN WARSAW

TRADING in Comecon, the Hungarians used to joke, was like selling a dead dog in return for two dead cats. Now, as East European experts try to reform their economic bloc, it is fast becoming clear that the whole region is like a vast pet's cemetery.

The Soviet Union, strapped for cash and late in payments to Western suppliers, is refusing to accept the low-quality industrial exports of East Europe, and wants to start trading in convertible currencies by next year at the latest. It wants hard cash for its oil, gas and mineral ores, and does not want bartered strawberry jam from Bulgaria.

"That is all very well," says Professor Andrzej Lubbe, the Polish delegate to the Comecon reform commission. "But it was the Soviet Union itself which supplied the designs for this obsolete machinery and which ordered it in the

first place. We have to change the trade structure, but it is not a simple matter to turn a second-generation factory that suits only the needs of an ageing Soviet industry into one that produces high-technology machinery and spare parts for a Western market." Hungary, in particular, structured its engineering industry round Soviet import needs. Now 200,000 Hungarian workers stand to lose their jobs unless Moscow keeps to its Comecon commitments.

The Comecon reform commission, set up in Sofia last December, has met in Warsaw, in Czechoslovakia, and this week in Moscow to work out how to change the statutes of the trading bloc. There are key differences on how to do it.

Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Mongolia want to transform Comecon into a consultative organization and would like to free individual states to join other trading organizations such as the European Community, the European Free Trade Association, or a proposed

Danube-Adriatic community. The other East European Comecon states believe the organization should link up with the European Community en bloc.

The economic union between East and West Germany is accelerating the pace of reform within Comecon. But the main question is whether the organization is reformable at all, or should be discarded.

Professor Lubbe says: "Comecon was the hand-maiden of a specific political system, and it was the political system and not Comecon itself which determined the scope and form of co-operation. It is an artificial system and very difficult to reform."

The main bickering is between the Soviet Union and the East Europeans. Moscow claims, rightly, that Comecon trade is unprofitable for the Soviet Union. Apart from a few commodities, all Comecon's prices are set by contract. Prices are determined by taking the average of overall world prices for the preceding five-year period. On the

whole, that has meant cheap oil for Eastern Europe. Payment is made by the transferable rouble, an accounting unit that tries to establish how many Hungarian buses are equivalent to a tonne of Soviet oil. Moscow feels that it is being systematically exploited by its allies, and that if it boosted its energy exports to the West it would soon solve its cash-flow problems. The East Europeans say that the Soviet Union is only losing out now.

Now Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary are moving ahead with market reform. The Soviet Union, despite much talk, is not. It believes it can create free trade relations between the Comecon countries without liberalizing its domestic market. The Poles and Hungarians are sceptical. Certainly the Soviet Union is alone in demanding an almost immediate switch to trading in convertible currencies. The Comecon countries are pursuing their own economic agendas and it would be plainly absurd to impose a new, uniform payment scheme

on intra-Comecon trade. The Group of Four — Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Mongolia — think there should be a graduated shift to business in hard currency (practically speaking, the Deutschmark and dollars) and always on a bilateral basis. Bulgaria wants to keep up its barter trade with Moscow for at least a few more years.

The 1990 trade protocol between Poland and the Soviet Union stipulates that 15 per cent of trade will be paid for in hard currency and that seems to set the pattern for other European Comecon members. Even so, there are constant arguments. The 1990 trade protocol was only signed at the last moment because the two countries could not agree on which consumer goods should be paid for in dollars and which in roubles.

East Germany is naturally quiet in these internal debates, wanting to keep options open for a unified nation and aware that its trade links with Moscow may add to its bargaining power with

Bonn. Its chief contribution to the reform discussion is to encourage the expansion of mixed trading associations between suppliers and customers and thus sidestep the clumsy bureaucracy of Comecon central planning. If this idea catches on it should help the restless Soviet republics toward economic autonomy from Moscow.

Comecon still has its defenders. One of Poland's top economic commentators, Mr Jerzy Kleer, says: "There is life after death for Comecon."

No East European country, apart from East Germany, stands a chance of entering the European Community before 2000. The small and technologically backward countries need to maintain their present markets — at least until there is full-blooded European integration. Only together can the East Europeans put real pressure on Moscow to lower the prices of raw materials. Finally, the East Europeans will have to act jointly to adjust to EC standards.

Yeltsin wins more support in fight for Russia power base

FROM MARY DEJEVSKY IN MOSCOW

MR BORIS Yeltsin, the iconoclastic former Politburo member, yesterday became one of eight declared candidates for the post of President of the Russian Federation. He is vociferously supported by radical deputies at the federation congress, hundreds of telegrams from all over the Soviet Union, and by a bevy of bouquet-bearing fans who wait on his every step. He has even been assured of success by the southsayer who reputedly advised the late Leonid Brezhnev.

Of the seven other candidates, Mr Yeltsin's main rivals are likely to be Mr Aleksandr Vlasov, the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, who is a polished bureaucrat of the old school, and Mr Ivan Poloskov, the head of the Communist Party in the southern region of Krasnodar, who is regarded as a traditional Marxist. Both are said to be supported by President Gorbachov.

A candidate who might come to the fore, if neither Mr Vlasov nor Mr Poloskov is seen as a strong enough competitor to Mr Yeltsin, is Mr Yuri Maslennikov, who was recently promoted to the

secretariat of the party Central Committee and has specialized in relations between the nationalities. Representatives of minorities from autonomous regions and republics within the Russian Federation constitute a strong lobby at the congress and might be expected to support him.

The other four candidates are local politicians who are unlikely to attract much support outside their own regions.

Five other candidates, including General Dmitri Volkogonov, whose speech balancing hardline socialism with support for Mr Yeltsin's views on Russian sovereignty earned him the most favourable response of the congress, withdrew from the race after being nominated.

The ballot is expected to be held late today after all the candidates have been given a chance to speak and answer questions. Assuming there are no procedural delays, the result can be expected late in the day or tomorrow.

President Gorbachov has been carefully watching the congress proceedings from a gallery towards the front of the hall almost every day since it started.

On Wednesday he took 40 minutes out of the lunch hour to address all the deputies about the dangers facing the Soviet Union, and to condemn Mr Yeltsin for being ostensibly anti-socialist and steering towards the break-up of the Soviet Union.

Yesterday afternoon he chose to watch the nominations being announced, rather than attend the Supreme Soviet debate on the Government's economic reform programme, which he had seen

introduced in the morning. Mr Gorbachov's regular attendance at the congress and his attack on Mr Yeltsin have been widely interpreted as a sign of his concern that a strong and popular politician could emerge to challenge his hold on power.

Mr Yeltsin has said that if elected he wants to make Russia strong within a strong Soviet Union. He also favours a multi-party parliamentary system and an end to the centre's stranglehold on important industrial enterprises.

These are policies which could, if implemented, drastically reduce Mr Gorbachov's powers as Executive President, to the point where he was little more than an arbiter between the republics.

Before the congress opened, Mr Yeltsin said he thought about 30 per cent of deputies were committed to voting for him, another 30 per cent were committed against, and the remaining 40 per cent were undecided. Some of the 40 per cent have been won over to his side in the past week by the strength of Mr Yeltsin's campaign, and by what some regard as the slanderous nature of Mr Gorbachov's attack on Mr Yeltsin.

The vote is likely to be much closer than it might have been 10 days ago.

According to the semi-official news agency Interfax, Mr Yeltsin is tipped to win by Mrs Dzhuina Davitashvili, the fortune-teller from Rostov-on-Don, who supposedly advised Brezhnev. She predicts that Mr Yeltsin will get 538 votes, eight more than he needs to win.

Capitalism drive, page 13

Test for Estonia police

FROM ANATOL LIEVEN
IN TALLINN

THE Estonian government plans to introduce an oath of loyalty for policemen to take effect this summer which could lead to a showdown in the Russian-dominated force.

The new Estonian Interior Minister, Mr Olev Laanjarv, said yesterday that under a new police law currently before parliament, policemen will have to decide "probably in August or September" whether to promise to obey the laws of independent Estonia.

"Those who are willing to obey our law will continue to serve, those who are not willing cannot remain as policemen," Mr Laanjarv said. He is himself a long-serving police official, and Estonians hope that he will be able to influence the police force to accept change.

In Latvia, protests by the police after the parliament's declaration of legal independence blocked the appointment of the new government's choice of Interior Minister. The police insisted successfully on retaining the existing incumbent, Mr Bruno Steinbricks, viewed by most Latvians as a "Moscow loyalist".

A resolution signed by more than 1,000 members of the Riga police force also stated their determination to go on upholding Soviet law. Police participation in anti-independence demonstrations is believed to have been averted only with the help of Mr Steinbricks's authority and after negotiations with both Moscow and the local police.

In Lithuania, many Russian and Polish policemen in the capital, Vilnius, still appear to be taking their orders from Moscow. So far, however, there has been no public test of the police's loyalty.

In the Estonian capital, Tallinn, too, all is evidently not well. Mr Laanjarv said that there have been no instances of disobedience in the 80 per cent Russian force in the city, but soon afterwards admitted that he had had to reprimand some of the police on duty at parliament during the demonstration by mainly Russian opponents of independence on May 15.

Mr Laanjarv said some policemen had disregarded orders to protect parliament, and that "ethnic sympathies played a part in this".

Dark prophecy for perestroika

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

PRESIDENT Gorbachov appears to believe that "an enlightened autocratic leadership" is the only short-term answer to the Soviet Union's problems, according to the annual report of the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies, published yesterday.

However, this had led to a clear inconsistency in his reform programme, it said. "Although he pushes for more democracy and seems willing to compromise on everything except, possibly, the territorial integrity of the USSR, he claims that it is necessary to acquire much more personal power to achieve greater democracy."

The institute said that Mr Gorbachov or a successor might feel it necessary to use the new powers "in a more restrictive and illiberal way than the world hopes". Forces had been unleashed which posed "awesome obstacles to the exercise of idealism". Ethnic feuds and suspicions were being fed by a number of

extremist groups and "some charismatic personalities". The report concluded: "It looks more and more likely that... this is more the hour of the clever tactician than of the democrat."

The survey of world events took up the message of last year's report, predicting that Mr Gorbachov had a very limited chance of succeeding in his reforms. "The Soviet Union appears to be sliding towards chaos, and how long, and how much of it, will remain together are very much open questions."

"The frustration and anger of the entire population have grown markedly. This anger is now being directed against the Government, including Gorbachov himself, whose personal popularity and credibility have declined markedly. Events in the USSR have spun so far out of control that there can be no certainty of what the country will look like when, and if, it finally stabilizes." (Strategic Survey 1989-1990, I.I.S.S., Brassey's, £15).



Moscovites queuing at the Gum department store yesterday to buy gold as a hedge against inflation after food price rises were announced

Thousands accuse Iliescu

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN BUCHAREST

ON THE eve of the announcement of Romania's election results, an angry crowd of 10,000 anti-communist demonstrators gathered in the centre of the capital to denounce the victory of Mr Ion Iliescu, the President-elect, as a fraud which they would not accept.

Even as the runaway victor for the presidency was planning his new administration, the barricaded "anti-communist zone" in the heart of the capital was ringing with cries of "Jos Iliescu" (Down with Iliescu) and allegations that he and the National Salvation Front cheated in the poll.

Angry Front supporters gathered on the fringes of the demonstration and by early evening there were a number of clashes between them and the demonstrators.

"These people should be shot. They will not accept the result of an election, so they should be dealt with," said a factory worker who opposed the protest. He and other

workers around him were furious that the police and Army had done nothing to break up the demonstration which has blocked the centre of Bucharest since April 22.

Yesterday the organizers printed thousands of leaflets calling for a special rally to mark the last day since the revolution in which Romania will be run by a provisional government rather than one with the legitimacy of the election behind it.

Far from any post-electoral reconciliation, the mood of the crowd was more bitter than at any time since the barricades were erected. Yesterday these were fortified with large metal structures in anticipation of attempts to remove them after the new Government is sworn in.

There were indications that the police were planning stronger action against the protesters. Three people distributing leaflets advertising the rally were arrested in different parts of the country. The police also broadcast an

appeal on the radio for citizens to report people seen distributing leaflets.

The breadth of the anti-communist opposition facing Mr Iliescu was clear to see in the sticky afternoon heat. As well as the fighters of the revolution, there were expectant mothers, fathers with children on their shoulders, high school pupils, intellectuals and office managers. At one stage, an old lady of 75 handed a single carnation to Mr Marion Munteanu, the student leader who has maintained the protest throughout the election campaign. She thanked him and said she hoped his fight against the communists would go on.

Addressing the crowd from a stand draped with a banner declaring "The Revolution Continues", speakers from many regional cities, including Sibiu, Constanta and Timisoara, pledged support. Some told how smaller-scale anti-communist protests had been broken up by the police in their home towns.



In full cry: Bucharest protesters demanding the resignation of Mr Iliescu yesterday

Forgiveness for sale in Romania

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN BUCHAREST

IN A novel scheme reminiscent of the papal indulgences once sold in Europe, one of the revolutionary groups which helped to overthrow Nicolae Ceausescu's regime has devised a method for ordinary Romanians to purge their communist past.

The group known as "21 December", whose 2,000 members all fought on the barricades, has drawn up an *atestat*, or certificate, which is now being sold in Bucharest and other Romanian cities for the meagre price of one leu (less than a penny). Aimed at some 3.7 million card-carrying Communist Party members, plus another four million Young Communists before the revolution, the document certifies that the purchaser has broken with his past and no longer wants to be a member of the party or its youth wing.

The group plans to put pressure on former leading Communists in the National Salvation Front, which won an overwhelming victory in this week's election, to purchase certificates. It has already set aside 100 for the use of the new leadership. Until the group's offer of the redeeming certificates, the only public gesture open to Romanians who wanted to express their wish to sever all links with the party was to tear up or burn their membership cards publicly.

The Communist Party has never been dissolved formally. After an about-turn by the provisional Government early in January, it remains in legal existence but in practice does not function. Its property and funds have been transferred to other organizations. Rumours persist that the Front used some of the money for its election fund.

The "21 December" group

plans to declare the party and its youth wing dissolved when it has sold enough copies of the *atestat* to cover half the old membership.

"We fought against communism in University Square in December and we continue to do so," said Mr Lucian Mihal, one of the group's leaders, referring to the demonstration which has blocked the square in the centre of Bucharest since April 22. "Therefore we believe that we are morally entitled to certify the dissolution of the Romanian Communist Party when it happens."

"Communist" has become one of the main terms of abuse of the opposition during the election campaign. Supporters of the victorious Front who dared to speak up against the anti-Communist demonstrators found themselves humiliatingly covered in hammer and sickle stickers.

At the barricade now erected across the eight-lane boulevard where so many students were mown down by Ceausescu's tanks, a "Communist Hall of Shame" has been erected. It contains photographs of many former Communist figures, such as Lenin, Stalin and Brezhnev, as well as Ceausescu and Romania's President-elect, Mr Ion Iliescu.

He has denied the allegations, put about by students and right-wing parties, that he is a closet communist. "Romania's break with communism was the most brusque and revolutionary in all Eastern Europe," he told correspondents as the final votes were being counted. "There is no way back. To try such a thing would be political suicide."

In another attempt to break with the communist past, which still haunts most Romanians, the once hated police force is being given new uniforms designed to make its members more acceptable to a public which still associates them with the violence and brutality of the Ceausescu era.

Less Soviet-style than in the past, the police uniforms are complete with a peaked white cap, new badges and a white pistol holder slung much lower on the belt.

"Nobody will say exactly where the design came from, but we believe they are modelled on the American police uniform," according to a spokesman for the Romanian Election Bureau. "The idea is to try and change the image of Romanian policemen."

Gothic heritage in peril as walled churches decay

FROM RICHARD BASSETT
IN SIGISOARA, TRANSYLVANIA

UP TO 300 medieval Transylvanian walled churches, described by art experts here as a vital part of the European Gothic heritage, face destruction within two years unless funds can be found to preserve them. Dr Matei Lykiardopol, one of Bucharest's leading architects, said that the churches, built between the 12th and 15th centuries by German colonists, would be soon derelict as the Germans who care for them leave Romania in their tens of thousands.

The churches are superb examples of Gothic art, kept in most cases scrupulously tidy by one or two German families who live within the walls around them. They were built to withstand sieges by the Turks and Tatars, and are outposts

of Christian civilization virtually untouched by modern Romania's turbulent history.

But after the December revolution, German emigration is slowly emptying villages which have now become inhabited by gypsies, with understandably little interest in preserving Gothic monuments.

In Sigisoara, one of the most spectacular of these churches has already had its windows smashed by vandals. Outside its west entrance, rubble from 15th-century sculptures lie scattered between bits of medieval stained glass. An old German inhabitant of the town, who patrols the church with a guard dog, says that he is powerless to stop vandals destroying the building. "Bucharest has no interest and certainly no money to keep these marvellous examples of European architecture

intact." Dr Lykiardopol explained the reasons behind the lack of official concern. "In the 1970s Ceausescu dissolved the Restoration Committee, the equivalent of your Royal Fine Arts Commission. These experienced men, who could have worked together to help restore such buildings, are now mostly over 80. There is no middle generation which has any expertise. Above all, there is no money."

Professor Gheorghe Grigorescu, until his enforced retirement in the 1970s one of the country's leading conservation experts, believes that Romania needs the equivalent of a Venice in Peril Fund to help preserve an important part of Europe's architectural heritage. "These are churches which in any other European country would be classed as outstanding monuments

under the protection of the state. Here, I fear, they will be demolished soon," he said.

A younger generation of Romanian architects has attempted to make known to a wider audience the plight of these churches. They are convinced that, as the Germans leave, many of the churches will be destroyed. "Architects from abroad will come and, of course, they will be allowed to build whatever they want," one of the architects in Bucharest said yesterday.

In the opinion of Dr Lykiardopol, "there is a primitive instinct among people here to want to destroy the old. It is mostly part of the Romanian temperament to want megalomaniac buildings, which replace older structures. This was exploited not only by Ceausescu but also by King Carol before him." One

solution to preserving these churches, whose 13th-century frescoes have delighted travellers and a select group of scholars for centuries, is to try to persuade the Germans not to leave.

A West German MP was recently in Bucharest and held talks with the Romanian Government to try to find some way of persuading the Germans to remain. One proposal was to give the DM4,000 (£1,400) with which Bonn used to "buy" each German emigrant to the Germans themselves.

However, it is unlikely they will be tempted to stay. It is also unlikely that their new homeland will be prepared to donate millions of pounds needed to restore what, in effect, in a few years' time will be 300 crumbling museums of an older order.

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AS MR Lee Kuan Yew, the Prime Minister of Singapore, arrived in Britain yesterday for a six-day visit, the Singapore High Commission drew attention to a dispute between him and *The Times*.

In a press advertisement, it referred to an article by Bernard Levin on April 12, headed "New Martyrs to Lee's Tyranny". It said this was a broad attack on Mr Lee, his leadership, and the Singapore judiciary.

Mr. Jenkins wrote to Mr Simon Jenkins, editor of *The Times*, seeking to rebut Mr Levin's views. He suggested that Mr Levin should interview him on British television under a BBC moderator. Mr Jenkins replied that he would be surprised if the BBC were interested, but would be prepared to discuss a written reply. Mr Lee also wrote to Mr Marmaduke Hussey, Chairman of the BBC, who accepted his suggestion. However, Mr Levin in a letter to Mr Hussey, rejected it. He said that, as his attack was made in *The Times* and was not repeated on BBC television, it was in the light of its "uniqueness" for Mr Levin to seek a right of reply in another medium. The advertisement that Mr Lee was disappointed that Mr Levin had not accepted the invitation.

Mr Lee is dining tonight with Mrs Thatcher at Chequers, and again at Downing Street on Tuesday. In a speech last night at a banquet given by the Lord Mayor of London, he chided some British firms for not taking opportunities in the region. "Do not repeat the mistakes of the 1970s and abandon South-East Asia as so many British firms did then."

"To divest resources towards Eastern, or even Western Europe, at the expense of Asia would be a costly mistake. Britain has always seized better chances, if sometimes late in the day. The 1990s is late enough."

McDonald's.

Mr Brady's latest figure, huge as it is, is nevertheless far from the one of the line, since it excludes the estimated billions of dollars in borrowing costs which could push the final sum during the next 10 years to \$300 billion or, according to some more pessimistic economists, \$500 billion.

The White House has admitted that the unforeseen costs of cleaning up the S & Ls are far more popularly known, could force up interest rates and threaten the health of the US economy at a time when some economists are still concerned about the risks of slipping into recession.

The US public also took a little more interest in the S & L saga after television cameras filmed Mr Neil Bush, President Bush's third son, giving testimony to Congress defending his part in the collapse of a large thrift in Denver, Colorado. He was director of an association which is now expected to cost taxpayers up to \$1 billion to rescue.

The ultimate cost of the overall industry bail-out is still unclear. President Bush last August signed into law a Bill authorizing what then seemed a huge \$50 billion to close down S&Ls which had failed before 1989. Until this week, his Administration had been portraying the clean-up as an unwelcome consequence of mistakes made by other people.

Mr Brady's testimony before Congress on Tuesday, however, highlighted the fact that the Treasury had underestimated the number of S&Ls that would fail while overestimating the country's economic performance. The Bush plan, for example, assumed there would be no inflation during the period of the rescue.

Mr Brady blamed rising interest rates and weak property markets in parts of America for the soaring costs of the clean-up. He made clear that Congress would have to authorize the spending of further large sums to ensure that depositors whose savings were insured by the Government did not lose their money.

President Bush yesterday admitted he did not yet know the full cost to taxpayers of the rescue but said the issue caused him "great concern". Private economists have estimated the figure at some \$3,200 per person. The mounting costs of the government rescue operation have added to the burden of paying off America's huge federal budget deficit.

Mr Alan Greenspan who, as chairman of America's central bank, the Federal Reserve Board, is accustomed to choosing his words with extreme care lest he ruffle international financial markets, told Congress: "The size of this hole is astronomical."

INDIA has been conducting a world survey on road accidents and has made a discovery that surprises nobody: its roads are among the most dangerous in the world. The only surprising conclusion is that India is not on the list. Mr K. P. Unnikrishnan, Minister for Surface transport, told Parliament with evident satisfaction that came only fourth. He said the worst record of road accidents was in Mauritius, with 73 crashes per 1,000 vehicles in a single year. India had a mere 19. He did not reveal who came second and third.

Within India, the big western state of Maharashtra has the worst accident record, followed by Tamil Nadu in the south. Anybody who has ever visited India marvels at the chaotic manner of driving and invariably asks why there are not even more accidents. The explanation is that, despite appearances, there are certain unwritten rules, the overriding one being that right is right.

Cars and scooters automatically give right of way to a bus that swerves deliberately across their path. There is no routing or gesticulating at the river, because the size of his vehicle gives him the privilege of throwing his weight around. It is a sort of caste system. Almost everywhere in India, car drivers do away with their wing mirrors because they only get smashed off in

the chaos of traffic jams. Besides, it is not custom and practice to check behind before swerving out into the "fast" lane.

The responsibility for avoiding a collision lies with the driver, who travels with his headlights flashing and horns blaring to warn the traffic ahead. Buses and lorries may not heed such warnings, given their higher status, and will change lanes without warning to the accompaniment of squealing tyres from the smaller vehicle behind.

There is no lane discipline in India. Traffic wanders back and forth as though not sure which side it should be on.

Speed limits, like exhaust emission levels, exist primarily for show (*The Times of India* published a splendid photograph yesterday of a police vehicle belching clouds of fumes, making a mockery of the campaign against pollution). Delhi is not against excessive exhaust emissions.

The rule of the road is that you travel as fast as possible, which is usually not fast at all. For those driving an Indian-made Ambassador, speed is impossible. The vehicle is a virtual replica of the 1957 Morris Oxford — chunky, solid, underpowered and so tall that an average man might feel he could almost stand up. If Hindustani Motors ever put a powerful engine in the Ambassador, India would undoubtedly shoot past Mauritius to claim top prize.



IN WASHINGTON
The United States has moved a big step closer to adopting some of the toughest environmental measures in the world after an overwhelming vote in the House of Representatives in favour of far-reaching clean-air legislation. The 401-

21 vote on Wednesday night echoed an equally emphatic Senate vote last month, and paves the way for the first breakthrough in attempts to clean up America's skies for at least 13 years. The Senate and House Bills, which must now be reconciled before going to the President for approval.

share the common objectives of ending acid rain, curtailing toxic industrial emissions and severely restricting pollution from cars through tough reduction targets, though they differ a little on the timetables for reaching those targets. However, the House Bill goes significantly further in its

proposals to cut vehicle emissions. It says that all new cars in the nine smoggiest US cities should be able to run on substantially cleaner "reformulated gasoline" by 1995, and that under a pilot scheme in California sales of cars able to run on alternative fuels like electricity or ethanol should

exceed 300,000 by 1997. The House Bill would also accelerate the phasing-out of chlorofluorocarbons and other chemicals contributing to the "greenhouse effect." For the first time, small industrial emitters of ozone-depleting substances would have to control emissions.

By ANDREW McEWEN
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

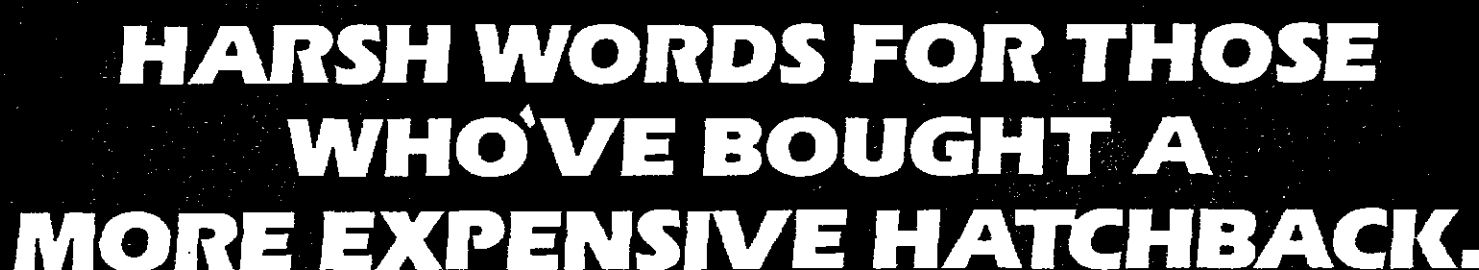
AN APPEAL by Mrs Thatcher for clemency on behalf of eight Hong Kong people who are due to be hanged in Malaysia next week has gone unanswered. The British authorities now feel it is inevitable that the seven men and a woman, all convicted of drug offences, will go to the gallows.

Mr Karpal Singh, a lawyer for three of them, said yesterday that the sentences would be carried out next Wednesday. "This will be the biggest mass hanging in the country," he said.

Mrs Thatcher wrote to Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamed, the Malaysian Prime Minister, on May 17 asking for the sentences to be commuted on humanitarian grounds. The same approach was tried unsuccessfully before Derrick Gregory, a Briton, was hanged for drug offences last July.

The sources said Britain had now done all it could. There has been no protest against the sentences, but the High Commission has protested over not being informed that they would go ahead.

The eight were arrested in 1982 at Penang airport after being found in possession of 28lb of heroin. They were convicted in 1985.



The motoring experts are writing nice things on the Skoda Favorit. Indeed, The Guild of Motoring Writers were so impressed by this new hatchback that they rated it in their top 10 cars for 1990.

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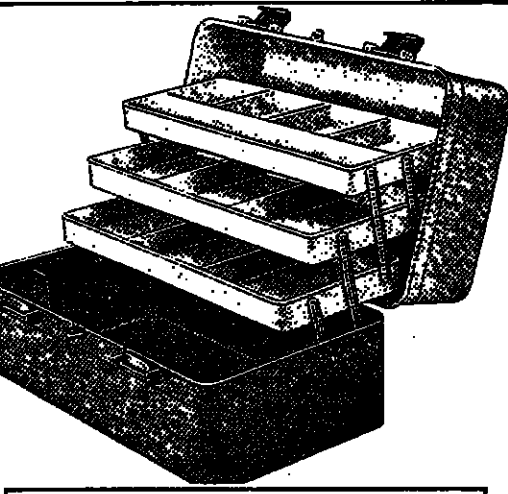
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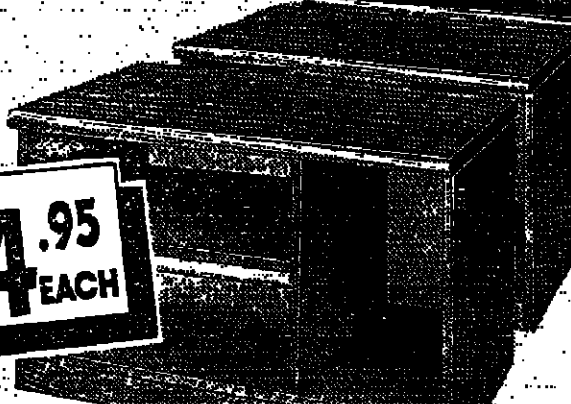
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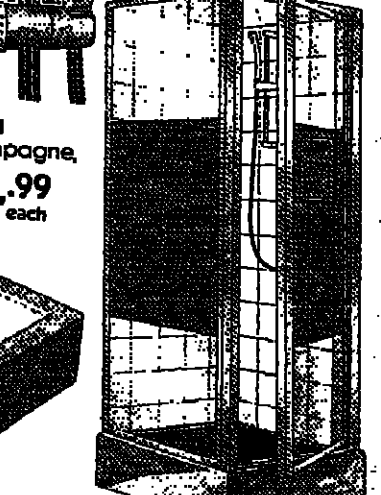


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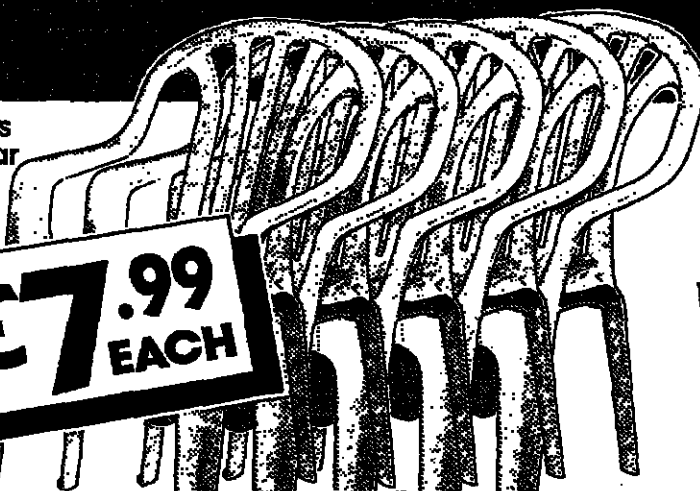




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NOBODY DOES IT BETTER

All at sea with a preposition

Philip Howard

The dominant preposition of the day is *on*, which is driving out older and more appropriate ones. A cinema is said to be *on* Oxford Street. Patients and hospital staff are *on* a ward. Soldiers are *on* guard duty or *on* fatigue, the implication being, I think, that their names appear *on* a list. Residents of Hampstead Garden Suburb claim, snootily, to live *on* the suburb, perhaps to distinguish themselves from lesser suburbanites who merely live *in* the suburbs. The one thing that you must never say is that you are *on* a warship, or ship of any kind. Sailors are terrific pedants for shipshape usage, as befitted members of the Senior Service. To say that somebody is probably *on* Rodney is to add solecism to offensiveness, and confirms nautical suspicions that landmen do not take their mystery seriously.

I had a letter from a learned Admiral of the Fleet declaring that the Royal Navy sails *in*, serves *in*, lives *in* a ship (not a boat, for Nelson's sake, unless you mean a submarine). Remember *In Which We Serve*? "When I joined the Navy, my second lesson was: 'You don't live *on* a house; you don't live *on* a ship.' (The first lesson was how to sling a hammock.)"

The argument, like all good tawls for red herrings, was first aired in the correspondence columns of *The Times*, as long ago as January 1902. A naval officer wrote to the editor asking whether the encroaching new use of *on* a ship was admissible, and stating that when the offensive land-lubber's preposition first made its appearance, it was the rule in some gun-rooms to cob any midshipman who used it. (Corporal punishment is nearly as old a naval tradition as correctitude about prepositions.) The argument raged and thundered like Trafalgar, and the nautical grammar emerged. As a ship is a hollow body, it is quite illogical to speak of a man serving *on* her. The usage of many centuries declares that, if one belongs to a ship, either as a member of her crew or as a passenger, one is said to be *in* her. If you pay a short visit to a ship, you are said to be *on* board her. *On* board is also used as an opposite to *aboard* (*abait* *aboard*) and *ashore*. And *inboard* is the opposite of *outboard*. In reaching a ship's deck any person, whether belonging to her or not, is, and always has been, said to go *on* board her. These common nautical prepositions of many centuries are quite clear and simple.

This did not stop the distinguished naval historian, L.G. Carr Laughton, conducting a careless fishing expedition for the prepositions that go with ships through English literature and history down the ages. His conclusions appeared in *The Mariner's Mirror*, the journal of the Society for Nautical Research, in 1912.

shortly before the Royal Navy was to be engaged in more serious argument. His conclusion, subbed down by a butcher with a cleaver, was that from the introduction of printing until after the middle of the 19th century, there were extremely few instances of *on* or *upon* a ship, the instances of *in* and *on board* outnumbering them by at least 10,000 to 1. Beginning with Chaucer, "and into ship she went", and working his way through the stirring Armada Papers, "they being ensconced within their ship and very high over us, we in our open pinnaces and far under them", Carr Laughton explained away infrequent *ons* when he bumped into them. Armada Papers: "The Queen's Majesty would have Pedro de Valdes to be sent safe into England; for that she thinks very inconvenient to have any such kept upon any English ship." This looked uncomfortably like the ignorant modern usage: "The only consolation which suggests itself is that the writer was no seaman, but William Waad, clerk to the Council." Peppys got it right, even when he was new to the sea: "News brought that the two Dukes are coming *onboard*. So soon as they were entered we shot the guns off."

Carr Laughton: "The mere fact that the means of getting *on* board a ship has always been the *entering* port should have served to remind men that a ship is hollow. But the modern mind will not have it so. It is common to hear of such-and-such boilers being *on* a ship; the same of stokers who are rarely seen *on* deck; and even of men serving *on* a submarine, which reduces the whole thing to absurdity." Dickens was sound on his prepositions: "Shipping Oliver Twist off *in* some small trading vessel."

This great labour of literary and sea-going research concluded resoundingly that *in* and *on board* are the correct prepositions to go with ships, sanctified by usage going back to Alfred the Great and other founding Admirals of the Fleet. Exceptions are *on* a wreck, because you usually can't get below *on* a wreck. You make sail *on* a ship because sails are always above deck when made. There is a nice point of punctuation about whether an officer has, or hoists his flag *on* a ship. *On* seems logical to me, analogous with making sail. But naval shellbacks insist on hoisting their flags *in* or *on board* a ship. *On board* is still naval jargon for being physically present in a ship or shore establishment: "Father *on board* this evening?" "No, he's gone *ashore* with the HODs."

The case of *in* or *on* with ships is a fascinating example of the continual struggle in English between tradition and analogy. For once, because of the absolute standards of the Navy, tradition has a chance of winning. It has so far for 15 centuries.

...and moreover

ALAN COREN

I have a homunculus on my right buttock. When I move one way, he smiles; another, and he grows glum. Grave and gay by turns, as he himself put it when he was a touch more alive than he is now.

This is a bit bloody peculiar, you will be saying. You do not know the half of it. Jumping to the conclusion that I am tortured will get you nowhere; my fair flesh is virgin to the buzzing needle. I have always held the view that life is complicated enough as it is without having a lost lover's *embodiment* inextricably going up and down every time you flex a pectoral. That said, the little fellow in my hip pocket is very nearly as bipartite as a fixture: I dare not go far without him.

He arrived yesterday, from Lloyds Bank, wrapped in a letter. We enclose a replacement cheque card for your use, said the letter, please sign the card immediately. It was the work of a moment to do this, and it would have been the work of another to slip the new card into my wallet had I not, as I did so, noticed a fuzzy little face in the corner of it. Hallo, I said, a breakthrough. What a good idea, sticking the cardholder's face on a card, that is one in the eye for mugger and pickpocket. And I put my glasses on to check the likeness.

It was a bloke with a beard. As I turned the tiny hologram, his expression changed several times, but it never became mine. Here we go, I said - as I have said so often when colliding with a technological glitch - they have sent me someone else's card. Is it not amazing, I said to the manikin, that, in this day and age, we can put a man on the moon, but we cannot guarantee that it will be the right man?

I uncrumpled the binned letter. If the card is lost, it said, please inform the Chief Inspector, Lloyds Bank plc, 071-626 1500.

"You have got the name right," I informed Cashpold, "but the picture is not of me." "It is not supposed to be of you. It is William Shakespeare."

I looked again. It was a photograph.

"How did you get a photograph of Shakespeare?" I inquired.

"It is an actor," said the Chief Inspector, "dressed up."

"All right," I said, because I am a reasonable man. "I can accept the how. What about the why? Why is there a hologram of William Shakespeare on my cheque guarantee card?"

"Not my department," said the Chief Inspector. "I suggest you speak to Jim Parsons. He handles corporate communications at APACS."

"APACS?"

"He signed. 'The Association for Payment Clearing Services,'" he said.

"Hello, Jim," I said, after a bit, and popped the question. "We call it the Bard Card," said Jim. "It facilitates recognition."

"Only of Shakespeare," I said. "I can see where if Shakespeare fetched up at the Tesco's till they would be more than happy to accept his cheque. Mind you, that said, it does occur to me that he never signed his name the same way twice. It is quite possible that if he put Shaggy, your Chief Inspector would have his glove on the Bard's collar before he'd got his trolley half way to the Volvo."

I was losing Jim. You can sense things like that. "It is not about identifying the cardholder," said Jim, a mite testily. "It is about identifying the card. When the retailer sees Shakespeare, it triggers the correct procedures. Remember, retailers may be foreign or illiterate, but they can all be trained to recognize Shakespeare."

I did not pursue any of the hares which, at this, had leapt from cover. I merely said: "All right, how did you arrive at Shakespeare?"

"Well," said Jim, "we'd put Beethoven on our Eurocheque card, and he went down very well. For example, he was not in any way political. So we thought: who is the domestic equivalent?"

"To what base uses we may return, Horatio!" I said. "I mean, Jim."

But I rang off cordially. After all, when you get right down to it, if imperious Caesar, dead and turned to clay, might stop a hole to keep the wind away, so what?

Provided it triggers the correct procedures in Tesco's.

Rodney Lord finds old interventionist urges trying to escape from Labour's policy review

The bulges in Mr Smith's new suit

Labour's new campaign document will stand or fall on the credibility of its economic programme. A shift there has certainly been. The party has abandoned pay policy and price controls, is pledged not to reintroduce foreign exchange controls, and will not reverse the privatization programme of the past nine years, except to a limited degree. But awkward bulges continue to interrupt the smooth contours of the new image of the party: the old interventionism will out.

John Smith, who has done so much to realize the image of responsible statesmanship, says it is a myth that Labour wants to destroy the market, but Labour still believes that markets fail to work properly in many sectors of the economy. The shadow chancellor makes no bones about this: "We want macroeconomic stability and supply-side intervention," he told *The Times*.

This is particularly clear with the party's industrial strategy. The three priorities are to increase spending on research and development, revive regional policy

(with particular emphasis on the more entrepreneurial development agencies) and improve education and training. Sometimes this will involve government money, sometimes "government leadership". Either way it implies market failure on a substantial scale.

In the capital market, too, there is a case for helping fund managers to see where their best interests lie. Pension funds are to be "encouraged" to invest more of their money locally and regionally. Though the language is much gentler than before, it is bound to raise fears (soothed by Mr Smith) of the kind of directed investment enthusiastically adopted by sections of the party in the past. There are remnants of Labour's obsession with the need for new institutions in the proposal to establish British Technology Enterprise, a government-funded body, to stimulate high-technology research in Scotland, Wales and the North of England.

Nor does a free market in takeovers necessarily produce an optimum ownership structure for

British industry. A Labour government would scrutinize takeovers carefully, putting the burden of proof on the acquirer rather than the authorities.

The biggest change is in Labour's attitude to the labour market. The paraphernalia of controls over pay and prices has gone, leaving free collective bargaining in its place. But it will be freedom within limits. A minimum wage is planned, equivalent to half the median male earnings. As Mr Smith acknowledges, this would have a substantial impact in some service sectors, such as fast food and retailing.

If there has been a "decisive shift in direction" it is more apparent in macroeconomic policy than Labour's supply-side interventionism. It is unlikely that all of Mr Smith's colleagues realize the full implications of Labour's decision to join the exchange-rate mechanism of the European Monetary System. James Callaghan refused to join when the mechanism was set up, for the good reason that Labour's policies at that time were

incompatible with membership. The shadow chancellor is prepared to accept a strengthened Department of Trade and Industry with "the enhanced status enjoyed in other countries", presumably because he knows that, in macroeconomic issues, ERM membership would give the Treasury the whip hand over the DTI and every other department. The only concession Mr Smith is prepared to make is that if inflation were still at something like its present level when Labour won office, the government would have to consider whether to join with a wider permitted band of fluctuation.

Once in, "We shall have to accept the obligations of keeping within the band." That means putting up interest rates if necessary to defend sterling.

Given the iron discipline of the Bundesbank, transmitted through the ERM, Mr Smith can afford to sound relatively relaxed about other aspects of macroeconomic policy. He is "very pragmatic" about the level of public spending as a proportion of the economy. But growth in public spending —

for which there is no shortage of plans in Labour's review document — will have to be fitted into overall economic policy.

Monetary policy is important to Labour, but Mr Smith sees another market failure here and thinks there is a case for direct controls on credit, perhaps of a temporary kind. Though the end of exchange controls makes credit controls difficult, he does not think it makes them impossible.

The rhetoric of Labour's macroeconomic policy is now for the most part orthodox. A Labour government would establish a stable framework rather than relying on short-term demand management, would aim for sustainable growth which does not run risks with inflation, and avoid any "dash for growth". But the "decisive shift of direction" depends heavily on the commitment to join the ERM. Take that away and the general direction of economic policy could turn out remarkably familiar. The point will not have escaped the Prime Minister and Chancellor as they, too, consider the merits of joining the ERM.

Gorbachov's revolution really does start here

The Soviet Union is inviting its people to vote on whether their cost of living should go up: that is the impression conveyed by many of the reports on the latest move towards economic reform. The Soviet leaders are not, of course, doing anything quite as silly as that. But they are taking a gamble.

The small print of this week's measures is not yet available, but it is clear that the strategy of Mikhail Gorbachov and his allies is no longer simply to reform the Soviet economy: they are seeking to transform it into a mixed economy of the Western type. In other words, their objective is capitalism. That is not how they describe it, but we now have sufficient evidence to make a confession superfluous.

The evidence comes from legislation recently passed or in draft. When and if that legislation is in place it will provide the legal framework for a mixed economy, and for converting state enterprises into companies in which individual Soviet citizens, whether or not they work in them, can freely buy and sell shares. Other Soviet companies, banks and other entities could also be shareholders, and so could foreign citizens and foreign firms. These companies would employ people who need not own any shares. So the legislation would re-invent the division between capital and labour that socialists have been trying to deny for more than a century.

This historic change of course has been managed so stealthily that few Western observers have spotted it. That is not surprising. Most Soviet citizens have not spotted it either. Mr Gorbachov tells Soviet audiences that ownership will remain "labour ownership". But then, as the economist Tatyana Koryagina wrote in a *Pravda* paper last month, Mr Gorbachov "is a man who does not like the truth... who tries to avoid personal responsibility for any specific measures".

Certainly, reading Gorbachov's lips is no way to find out what is going on. The plans for economic liberalization have not been set out as they have been in Poland and Hungary, as part of the programmes of new political parties. Instead, an unelected leader speaks in code about creating a "regulated market", one of his lieutenants (Nikolai Ryzhkov)

gets the privilege of announcing price increases, and nobody in authority explains what it is all about. To find out, one has to pay attention to the laws and draft laws of the past few months.

The most important are the framework law on ownership, passed in March, and an unpublished draft law on so-called "joint-stock companies". It is on these two texts that the picture given above of future Soviet companies is based. Apparently policy-makers in Moscow have been talking of state ownership being reduced over time to less than two-fifths of industrial assets. But though the Soviet leadership seems, at last, to have decided on truly radical reform, knowing where they want to go is not the same as knowing how to get there, and how fast.

Installing the legal framework of a mixed market economy is difficult enough in the Soviet Union, but there must also be changes in institutions: all or nearly all prices have to be decontrolled; anti-monopoly measures implemented; state assets sold (or given away); imports no longer directly controlled; a central bank, separate commercial banks, and a stock exchange set up; a proper tax system; unemployment benefits, and so on. To operate these there have to be

new kinds of people, like accountants and tax inspectors.

Nobody can seriously expect all these new arrangements to be operating smoothly within two or three years, nor that the change can be made without a great many people having to switch jobs, with spells of unemployment and reduced incomes. Higher average levels of prosperity should be the end result, but when?

A radical approach would be to compress the institutional and policy changes into a year or so, as the Poles are trying to do: remove subsidies, decontrol prices and supplies, impose a monetary squeeze, cut import barriers and start to privatize, all in one go. This would still not deliver the goods immediately, but at any rate the Gordian knot would be cut.

The Soviet strategy is much more cautious. It envisages three main stages. The first would occupy the rest of this year and most of next. It would include stabilizing the consumer market, in part by raising the controlled prices of basic items and curbing wages, cutting the state budget deficit, shifting resources to increase consumer-goods supplies, and starting to sell housing, state bonds and shares to mop up domestic savings. The legislation

required for a mixed economy would be passed, there would be indexation of some incomes, and a system of unemployment benefits.

Decontrol of prices and supplies would come next, with changes in ownership continuing, but (presumably) not going very far before the mid-1990s. The plan envisages "de-stification" of the economy continuing to the period 2000-2005, as public limited companies, family firms, co-operatives, worker-owned enterprises and other varieties of ownership replace the traditional state enterprise in well over half the economy. So the late 1990s would be a third stage, of consolidation. To anyone who has seen the 1953 French film, *The Wages of Fear*, the Polish and Soviet strategies recall the alternatives facing the truck-drivers transporting nitro-glycerine along a corrugated road: to avoid blowing themselves up they have to drive at less than 4mph or at more than 40.

The main snag about the 40mph strategy is that the decontrol of prices is supposed to come only when inflationary pressure has been reduced: but a degree of inflationary pressure is built into the old system, and it will be impossible to get away from the traditional supply controls and output targets until prices are decontrolled. The danger therefore

is that decontrol is postponed indefinitely, and all the rest of the transformation with it.

Admittedly, the Polish strategy is risky, even in Poland. It may not succeed. But if one asks why the Soviet leadership has chosen the slow track, one comes back to the political crux of the Soviet attempt at liberalization. The Soviet leadership has no popular mandate for radical policies, and fears that tough reform measures will create enough unrest to destroy it. This political fear is exacerbated by all the splits that have opened up within the USSR, in particular the secession movements, and because five years of confused economic policies and muffled pseudo-reforms have already reduced living standards.

It looks as though the Soviet leadership's attempt to transform the Soviet economy is severely — perhaps critically — weakened by its failure to complete political liberalization. A leadership competitively elected on a programme that included economic transformation would have a better chance. So would a leadership that had cut the conflicts in its agenda by letting the Baltic states go.

A mixture of carefully designed referendums and authoritarian deployment of his presidential powers might yet carry Mr Gorbachov's economic programme through. But a prolongation of the present muddle looks more likely. The author is professor of Soviet economics at Birmingham University.

Armstrong for Eton?

Lord Charteris of Amisfield, the immensely popular Provost of Eton since 1978, is to retire next year, after the 550th anniversary celebrations. Generally regarded as a "cool dude" by the boys, whom he often entertains, he will be much missed. A successor has not yet been announced, but a recent dinner at the provost's lodge to introduce housemasters to Lord Armstrong of Limington might provide a clue. A Fellow of Eton College for a number of years, the former Sir Robert Armstrong, flew to Australia in 1987 to appear as the British government's chief witness during the *Spycatcher* trial. Armstrong's mastery of evading the awkward question, on show there, may not be a good example to set 1,270 adolescent boys. Sir Antony Acland, currently Ambassador to the US, is thought to arouse far more enthusiasm in OE breasts, although there is "nothing in the wind" about his retirement from Washington, according to a Foreign Office spokesman.

Flight of Wimsey

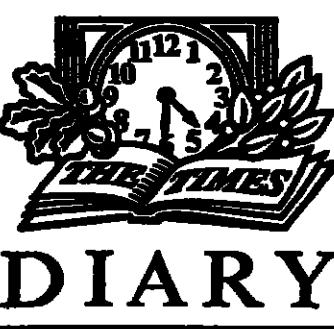
Fact and fiction become blurred when one is dealing with the Dorothy L. Sayers Society. Detective work has proved to their satisfaction that the crime-writer's fictional hero, Lord Peter Wimsey, was born 100 years ago — on 24 November 1890 — a fact mentioned in none of the novels. And the society, which fields nearly 500 members and has

as its patron the Archbishop of Canterbury, is celebrating the Wimsey "centenary" with gusto this year. This Sunday it holds a lunch at an Oxford hotel, "55 years to the day" after Lord Peter became engaged in the Oxford novel *Gaudy Night*. Wimsey's Oxford career will also be remembered, with the Dean of Balliol, Dr John Jones, convening in the deception with a talk on "The Balliol of Lord Peter Wimsey 1909-1912".

The debonair fictional hero charmed not only the society — Christopher Deans, its secretary, remarks, "Everyone says with a smile that Lord Peter is real" — but also the authoress herself, who seemed to fall in love with him as the novels developed. After five years of marriage, she even introduced an *alter ego*, Harriet Vane, who, after much playing hard to get, marries Wimsey. But Sayers's life too had a central mystery: she never revealed who was the father of her illegitimate son, Anthony.

Bit of a devil

The veteran entertainer Michael Bentine has shed new, and more lurid light on the life of Stephen Ward, one of the key figures in the Profumo scandal. In *Open Your Mind*, a book celebrating the ex-Goon's half-century in showbusiness, Bentine reveals Ward's dabblings in the occult. Ward, he says, invited him to join a "paranormal circle", modelled on the 18th-century Hell Fire Club. The circle met at Ward's rented cottage on the Astor estate at Cliveden, but Bentine made his excuses and stayed away. Bentine met Ward in



1947 while he was appearing at the London Palladium, and in the book makes another strange allegation: he claims that the photographs of Ward's orgies, which so disgusted Lord Denning that he recommended they be destroyed, ended up in the Labour Party's filing cabinets.

● The notorious show-closing power of Frank Rich, the New York Times theatre critic who reserves special venom for British musicals, may be on the wane. New York's faith in British musicals seems to be stronger than ever, with \$8.5 million being taken on the first day of bookings for Miss Saigon, even though the show is not due to open until next April. What is more, Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Aspects of Love*, which was derided by Rich, has six Tony nominations, including one for best musical. The ill-fated musical King, it is said, was premiered in London rather than on Broadway to avoid the attentions of Rich and because, according to the executive producer Peter Wilson, "British critics don't close shows." But when the show sank in Britain, the critics were blamed anyway.

Owen's odds

Amid speculation about Dr David Owen's future after his revelation to *The Times* that he has not ruled out rejoining the Labour Party, Ladbroke has rushed out odds on his prospects of surviving the next general election. Owen is deemed to have only an even chance of holding his seat for the SDP, but Ladbroke's director, Ron Pollard, says: "He is odds on to win as a Labour candidate." The betting group is, however, coy about the prospects of Neil Kinnock extending an olive branch to his old enemy. And Owen's belief that the SDP



will survive the election with or without him is not borne out by odds of only 50:1 on its survival as a party, with the odds also against Rosie Barnes and John Cartwright holding their seats. The SDP has — as revealed here — cancelled its 1993 party conference, but it will hold one at Scarborough in 1992, according to the National Secretary Tim Rycroft. Its political opponents predict, however, that this will be the occasion when

members will officially vote to wind up the party, if it is annihilated at the general election, as they and the bookies expect.

Comic cuts

An amusing little programme called *Leslie Live* has brought corporate dismay to the 1,500 staff of Central Television. Beamed into the company's three main studios in Birmingham, London and Nottingham, with the staff comprising an unusually attentive audience, the programme was the vehicle used by Leslie Hill, the managing director, to announce an economy drive of swingeing ferocity. Foreign travel unless in the most exceptional circumstances, first-class air fares, entertaining and recruitment have been banned for staff at all levels, with the threat that programme making will be jeopardized if the economies are not followed to the letter. The difficulties of the company, one of ITV's big five and the producer of *Spitting Image*, *Inspector Morse* and *The Cook Report* among other programmes, have been caused by a 7 per cent fall in advertising revenue in the first three months of the year and an estimated 100 per cent increase in its annual levy to the government. A leaked memorandum from Hill reveals that the cutbacks will leave no entertainment allowance untouched in the search for savings. The memo says succinctly: "No hospitality cutbacks (including all directors). Disgruntled employees, who have been urged to come up with their own ideas for further savings, have put forward one immediate suggestion: axing *Leslie Live* from the schedules."



1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

LABOUR'S SALES PITCH

One individual stalks the pages of the Labour Party's policy document published yesterday, Mrs Margaret Thatcher. In the last 11 years, her Government has changed the language and outlook of friend and foe alike, and not least Mr Neil Kinnock. In the seven years of his leadership, he has been forced by Mrs Thatcher's electoral impact to turn Labour from an unelectable, largely urban ramp, slithering into oblivion and doomed to replacement by fly-by-night centre coalitions, back into an alternative government. The Shadow Cabinet is now clearly acceptable to a majority of the electorate. Mr Kinnock's achievement ranks high in the story of Britain's post-war politics. He has grasped the mantle of post-Thatcherism and is tugging it over his head.

The policy review, with the banal title of *Looking to the Future*, presents a party jettisoning its past commitment to renationalization, to government controls over the economy and industry, to taxes to enforce the repatriation of overseas capital and to the repeal of all Conservative trade union reforms. Mr Kinnock has reduced to near-invisibility the unilateral nuclear disarmament which made absurd Britain's participation in Nato and was one of Labour's biggest electoral handicaps.

This is a retreat not just from some naive "socialism", it is an acceptance that the planning enthusiasm which offered intellectual succour to Labour politicians and trade unionists in the 1960s and 1970s is dead. The experience of 1979 wounded it fatally. East Europe in 1989 supplied the *coup de grace*. Whatever flapping may take place on the left of the party, socialism is now dust on the shelf of history, as Labour joins the "social democracy" dance across Europe.

The review shares with most manifestos a conviction that British politics is primarily about economic dynamism. Short of socialist certainties, it is curiously lacking in ideological substance. Labour's belief in the market is proclaimed alongside a "partnership between the private and the public interest". The nation is assured that under Labour there would be "no irresponsible dash for growth". There would be a monetary framework providing long-term exchange and interest rate stability. Labour would "not spend... more than Britain can afford". It would borrow for investment, "as any sensible business does" — Thatcherism's thumbprint is everywhere — but current spending must be paid from current revenue, boosted by a buoyant economy (yes, that old one). As a result, total taxation would not need to rise, though it would be more related to ability to pay.

Small wonder all this has left the old Social Democrat divorcees gasping. Labour has performed the oldest trick in the book of Britain's bipolar politics, and stolen the centre's clothes. Nowhere is the theft more patent than in industrial relations. Almost all the Conservative reforms are now accepted as part of the trade union landscape, including the end of the closed shop, ballots on strikes and union elections. Moreover, though Labour will restore the right to take "sympathy action" and use secondary picketing where there is a "direct interest", ballots would apply and picketing would be subject to a code. This is a real shift towards individual rights in industrial relations and away from traditional collectivism.

The preoccupation with the environment and "rights" is more predictable. So too is the flurry of buzzwords and quangos that tend to emerge from Oppositions long out of power: "green taxes", an Environment Protection Executive, a Food Standards Agency, a Regional Development Agency, a National Investment Bank, a Ministry of Women, a Freedom of Information Act.

Yet even in domestic policy, there are signs of the shrewd salesmanship of Mr John Smith's "Treasury in waiting". On education, the last document spoke of abolishing the last remaining non-comprehensive schools. This

one simply talks of the commitment to comprehensive education and lays a stress on raising education standards (with a national curriculum). This is now common ground, though the old Adam of Labour ideology survives in the intention to abolish the assisted places schemes at independent schools.

Labour's ambition for the health service will appeal to many. Even the rumoured skirmishes between Mr Smith and his "spending department" colleagues have played into Mr Kinnock's hand. The public may believe Labour would spend more than the Conservatives on health, housing and the social services, and yet be reassured by soothing noises on taxation and public expenditure.

On constitutional reform, Labour is more at sea. Commitments to reform the House of Lords tend to disappear into the mist soon after election. The proposal for regional government in Scotland makes sense, but in the rest of the regions less so. Nor has Labour yet grasped the chance, given it by Mrs Thatcher's reckless flirtation with local government, of a new system of local taxation. Local government is Labour's Achilles' heel.

This is in part why the task of matching promise to potential is so hard. What cursed the last Labour government was not socialism, nor even some naive pursuit of social justice. The curse was incompetence, bred of an intellectual suspicion of free markets and a conviction that, if socialism offered no guide to economic prosperity, bureaucracy was the next best thing. Would Mr Kinnock really permit markets to operate? Would he really withdraw government intervention from the Ravenscraig and the Rover cars? Would he really tell Manchester council to subcontract its municipal services rather than give it a higher central grant?

The review declares that markets can be "good servants but bad masters". A partnership is required in which the government must intervene "where necessary". Hence Labour proposes to take a 51 per cent stake in British Telecom. Last year, its industry spokesman, Mr Bryan Gould, said that, after provision for investment, privatized utilities returned to public ownership might have nothing left for dividends. Labour proposes to take water back into public control. And where is the free market in the promise to "secure the future of the coal industry" and reverse the growth in coal imports?

Mr Kinnock has sought, in his constitutional reforms to the Labour Party, to ensure that some of the old lobbies and pressure groups would have less leverage over a future Labour Cabinet than in the past. He would like a party based on the democratic principle of one vote to each party member, in place of the union and constituency cliques. But he has not achieved this. He may have disposed of much outdated ideological nonsense, but not yet disposed of the structural shortcomings that made past Labour governments so bad.

Labour remains in power in almost all the towns and cities of Britain. There can be seen the proof of Mr Kinnock's policy pudding: high taxes, huge public sector payrolls, fierce union pressure against privatization, dirty streets and poor services and local parties still rooted in the 1960s. It is barely credible that a future Labour government would be able, emotionally or constitutionally, to resist the blandishments of Nalco, Nupe and the General and Municipal Workers. Thatcherism has yielded huge increases in public spending, notably in health, social security and local government. Yet Labour ceaselessly promises to "spend more".

Labour is still not a mass party, as the Conservatives in their prime have been. It is the party of sectional, albeit substantial, interests: the trade unions. The unions pay for Labour. They do so in the expectation of return, a return that will protect their status and their privileges. Like Mr Gorbachov, Mr Kinnock may well struggle to change all this. Like Mr Gorbachov, he has not yet succeeded.

THE AMERICAN NIGHTMARE

Racial violence has flared again in New York. Journalists wear bullet-proof waistcoats and go about with bodyguards, after claims by Mayor David Dinkins that the press is mischievously blowing on the embers of racial hatred. Ever since the murder last August of a black youth by a white lynch mob in Brooklyn prompted a series of racially-motivated incidents and sensational trials, conversation in Manhattan salons has revolved around the phenomenon of the urban "underclass".

This jargon-word is less loaded than Marx's *Lumpenproletariat*, and a little more specific than the 1960s notion of "alienation". It denotes a largely illiterate and fatherless stratum of urban society, heavily dependent on welfare payments and caught up in drug-related crime, within which individuals have little prospect of breaking a vicious circle of anti-social action and punitive reaction. This self-destructive conduct reproduces itself from one generation to the next. Above all — and here the analysis ceases to be academic and becomes highly sensitive — the underclass in America is predominantly black.

Some are sceptical of this talk of an underclass and seek a revival of the "Great Society" that inspired the liberalism of 30 years ago. They blame conservative administrations for the soaring crime statistics, for the drug pandemic, for the refusal of the poor to pick up their beds and walk. They seek more money for welfare, more positive discrimination for blacks — in short, more determined intervention by government. Yet America's cities have experienced at least a quarter century of just such intervention, most of it unsuccessful.

The liberal response is to claim that racism must have been "institutionalized" in a society which, after all, abolished slavery a mere 117 years ago. This argument ignores the fact that, while it is only a generation since blacks gained full civil rights in parts of the South, that is not where racial tensions are now most severe. Many blacks prefer the informally segregated South to the urban quagmires of the North.

Others — libertarians of left and right — are increasingly advising the decriminalization of the underclass's principal economic activity, drug trafficking, albeit as a counsel of despair. Breaking the link between drugs and crime would tip the economic scales in favour of legal, or at least less suicidal, livelihoods. Though many of those who work in the black ghettos remain doubtful, this argument is gaining ground. Where custom and practice within a community are far adrift of the law, consent for law decays and anarchy prevails.

However, even the most ardent advocates of narcotic decriminalization could not argue that such laws would abolish the underclass, still less stem the apparent growth in racism. Less spectacular ideas have also been mooted. Gun law reform is an obvious desideratum, but is unlikely to make headway. America's public city schools have a lamentable record. The federal authorities have precious little influence on education, but recent moves in some states to give individual schools greater autonomy may restore the traditional escape route for poor minorities.

Even more fundamental is the breakdown of the traditional family, without which the moral bedrock of society speedily turns to lava. Here government is helpless: change must come from within the underclass itself. To preach self-help from the heights of Harvard or from Capitol Hill is easy. To do so from the depths of the urban black quarters will need courage and encouragement.

The responsibility of the press to forbear from inflaming outbreaks of mutual recrimination between America's ethnic communities is considerable. Unless New York's popular papers resolve to provide more objective court reporting, they risk incurring attempts by black politicians to muzzle them. Self-restraint is not necessarily self-censorship. The plight of the underclass is sufficiently baffling without incendiary public squabbles between the political and journalistic representatives of the world's most fascinating city.

Romanian elections reflected in a different light

From Mrs Jessica Douglas-Home
Sir, Mrs Currie's naive enthusiasm (May 24) for the Romanian elections suggests that during her brief visit she did not gain a clear understanding of the complexity of what has been happening in Romania recently. She claims her views were shared by other British and international observers.

As one of those observers I should like to register a strong protest against her frivolous and impressionistic résumé of the events. It may be that in Bucharest and Timisoara, into which Mrs Currie ventured, the election maintained an appearance of fairness. However, our 60-strong delegation (organised from Washington), which was deployed in 11 areas throughout the country, formed a rather different impression.

Our group had people present who had also been in Romania during the campaign, and not only two days before the election.

Our report has stated that "the process was flawed" and that "the opposition views were effectively prevented in all regions of the country". We were certainly not "thrilled", as Mrs Currie suggests, by what we saw.

Mrs Currie does, it seems, have a few reservations. "A more vigorous press and media", she writes, "is also essential". The problem, however, is not one of vigour, but one of independence. The press and media were controlled throughout the campaign by the ruling National Salvation Front, which was able to present itself as the only plausible candidate for power, while spreading disinformation about the opposition parties.

There is no evidence in Mrs Currie's letter that she has the first understanding of the social structure of the towns and villages. Almost all of the mayors were appointed by Ceausescu's officials, one of whom (the party official in charge of ideology) was Ilescu himself. These mayors fear nothing so much as genuine loss of power by the people who appointed them. And it is they who effectively administered the polling booths, providing friendly "advice" to the bewildered voters who were entering them for the first time.

Yours faithfully,
JESSICA DOUGLAS-HOME,
63 Hillgate Place, W8.

From Mr Sandu Pobrezevic
Sir, Returning from a five-day trip to Romania, Mrs Edwina Currie, MP writes — with all her usual self-confidence — of having been "present at the birth of a new democracy". Does she have the faintest idea about what the National Salvation Front, having already rigged the elections, are now doing?

No sooner had Mrs Currie said how thrilled she was by the electoral process than:

1. The World Union of Free Romanians was told by the National Salvation Front to vacate its premises.

2. The National Peasant Party and the Liberal Party and the other opposition parties were ordered by the Front to vacate their party headquarters.

3. The Front told several independent newspapers — the *Baricade*, the *Express*, *Romania Libera* and *Zig Zag* — that if they did not support the Front they would no longer receive supplies of newsprint or any time on the State printing press. And this has been confirmed by the minister in the National Salvation Front Government, Ladislau Haghecu.

Is this Mrs Currie's idea of a free opposition, a free press and free speech?

After her five days in Romania Mrs Currie is now safely back in England. To the Romanians who are going to have to endure life under the National Salvation Front her naive remarks will be very hard to stomach.

Yours sincerely,
S. POBREZEVIC (President),
World Union of Free Romanians
(UK Branch),
54-62 Regent Street, W1,
May 24.

From Baroness Cox and Miss Rachel Tingle

Sir, Like Edwina Currie, we have just returned from Romania, where we were official observers of the elections on behalf of the European Democrat Union. But unlike her, we would by no means agree that they were "as free and fair... as could be achieved by people for whom this was all completely new".

We visited polling stations in Oradea, Arad and various villages. We concur that, from what we saw, the polling itself was con-

ducted properly. But this is not conclusive proof of a proper election. For an election to be free and fair demands that there be no pre-election intimidation and that all parties are able to disseminate information freely. Our conversations with people in those towns led us to believe this was not the case.

In the county of Bihor, villagers received visits by men (who they thought were probably Securitate), who said that if either Mr Ion Ratiu or Mr Radu Campeanu were elected president their land would be sold to westerners, leaving them homeless and jobless. They also said that a number of rural polling stations were manned only by members of the National Salvation Front because the opposition parties had been so intimidated that they had not taken up their places on the electoral committees.

Moreover, the opposition parties were systematically denied the right to disseminate information freely. We do not consider that such tactics have conducted its elections properly.

Yours etc,
CAROLINE COX,
RACHEL TINGLE,
3 Amellian House,
Stough Lane, NW9,
May 24.

Habsburg monarchy

From Mr Michael McGarvie

Sir, With reference to the proposed Habsburg restoration (leading article, May 11; letters, May 22), the Emperor Franz Joseph himself summed up succinctly, but with insight and prophecy, the cardinal purpose of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. It was, he told his Minister President, Ernst von Koerber,

an absolute necessity for the present existence and for the future of her people. It is a refuge for all those fragmentary nations of Central Europe which, without a common home, would have a deplorable existence and be tossed about by all their powerful neighbours.

— a judgment as valid today as when uttered in 1904.

Yours truly,
MICHAEL MCGARVIE,
19 Styles Hill,
Frome,
Somerset,
May 22.

Chernobyl appeal

From the Ambassador of the USSR

Sir, I would like to convey through your newspaper our sincere gratitude to all British people who rendered their practical and moral support to the Chernobyl "telephone" appeal last month (report and photograph, April 27).

The telephone organizing committee has asked me to emphasize that the British contribution to the appeal efforts is highly appreciated indeed. The actual amount of donations and other help world wide is being worked out at the moment. As soon as it is finished the organizing committee will inform about the concrete way the raised money is to be spent to assist those in the affected areas.

Yours faithfully,
I. ZAMYSLOV,
Ambassador of the USSR,
13 Kensington Palace Gardens, W8,
May 21.

Canterbury succession

From the Reverend David J. Ellis

Sir, The Reverend P. E. Ursell (May 18) is right at least to bring us back to the New Testament in the matter of selecting a new archbishop. He has, however, missed a vital element in the choosing of Matthias to fill the vacancy left by the suicide of Judas Iscariot. The remaining 11 apostles, so we are told, prayed carefully and explicitly over the task before them. How much of this, I wonder, goes into the present selection process?

As to the desirability of casting lots, I share your correspondent's conviction. Indeed, I believe that many other church appointments might be served very suitably by this method.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID J. ELLIS,
International Community Church,
Vine House,
41 Portsmouth Road,
Cobham, Surrey,
May 18.

North and south

From Professor Emeritus R. Mansell Prothero

Sir, Your feature on world population (Science and Technology, May 17) has not distinguished between the division of the world into North (developed) and South (less-developed), as in the Brandt report, and the northern and southern hemispheres divided by the equator. It uses the latter in place of the former.

The majority of population of the less-developed parts of the world are in countries located in the northern hemisphere. The most populous countries in Africa and Asia (with exception of Indonesia) are to the north of the equator.

Yours faithfully,
R. MANSELL PROTHERO,
Vine House,
Parkgate Road,
Neston, South Wirral,
May 18.

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — (071) 782 5446.

Poll tax alternatives

From Mr R. C. Clarke

Sir, Any new local taxation system should seek to give higher significance to local accountability which the poll tax singularly fails to do. How can this be done?

First, central and local government must listen to one another and establish a much clearer distinction between the two functions of local authorities — as an agent for central government in providing what are perceived as national services and in its own right as a local authority. Government should bear the cost of agency services; local electors those determined locally. Subject to this, a greater rather than a lesser part of local expenditure should be borne by local tax payers.

Secondly, the base from which local revenue is to be raised should be clearly demarcated. The alternatives are property or people — some form of rates or some form of community charge. The arguments for the latter, particularly in respect of accountability, are being seen to be less and less valid and the practical difficulties of collection become daily more evident.

House of Lords role

From Mr Charles P. Reed

Sir, Professor Zelik (May 21) should not make a constitutional crisis out of a political drama. The House of Lords would be acting within its powers if it threw out the war crimes Bill; the Parliament Acts 1911 and 1949 provide the necessary mechanism for dealing with such a situation. It may well be that this procedure has not been used in the last 41 years, but that is because it is a mechanism of last resort which the second chamber would not wish to invoke save in the most exceptional circumstances.

It can be argued that the contents of the Bill and its method of passage through the Commons constitute such exceptional circumstances. The Bill seeks to make radical changes to the criminal justice system and the traditional concepts upon which it is based.

Museum cuts

From the Keeper of Entomology at the Natural History Museum and others

Sir, Professor Donovan (May 14), like several other critics of the Natural History Museum's corporate plan, is mistaken to think that our policy of focusing research into particular topical areas involves abandoning taxonomy and collection-based science.

In the Department of Entomology, for example, the museum's human-health programme involves identification of biting flies that transmit tropical diseases; in the biodiversity programme we are collaborating in the preparation of identification guides to insects in Central America, including training for Costa Ricans who will undertake an inventory of their national parks; and our contribution to the living-resources programme currently involves producing basic taxonomic information on crop pests and for biological control work.

The time has come to re-examine the alternatives.

A front runner must be site value rating — a tax on unimproved land values. Land is a natural resource not made by man; site value arises as the result of location in an area of economic activity, not what is done on the site itself; a tax on bare land values does not fall on production but encourages enterprise; it is simple to assess and cheap to collect; it cannot be evaded or passed on to others. These are significant merits to which can be added fairness and accountability since the payment to public services will be directly related to the site value created by public activities.

Under the old system improvements attracted higher rates and profits from speculating in land became so great as to undermine the work ethic. A tax on land values excluding all buildings and other improvements would help to redress this and re-establish the primacy of productive enterprise.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD CLARKE,
Sunflower Cottage,
Little London,
Lechlade,
Gloucestershire.

There will, I am sure, be several contributions from the judges, both serving and retired, who sit in the Lords; it is likely that some of these contributions will contain strong advice against the enactment of this measure.

The House of Lords must not be deterred from exercising its power if convinced by such arguments. It is not a mere talking shop or advisory body; it is part of the legislature with a well-established function of acting as a check on the first chamber. To suggest that the House should not do so for fear of provoking a constitutional conflict makes nonsense of the philosophy upon which the Parliament Acts are based.

Yours faithfully,
CHARLES P. REED (Dean,
School of Law),
Lansdowne Independent
University College,
3/5 Palace Gate, W8,
May 21.

Half of our staff are employed in the collection and information programme — newly created specifically to preserve the national collection of 25 million insect specimens, and to make this treasurehouse of information available to everyone.

It is true that taxonomy underpins all of biology. Yet when public interest in environmental issues has never been greater, science funding for taxonomy has never been lower. One truly wonders what future generations will think of science policy in Britain when so many of our resources are devoted to studying things which will endure far longer than mankind, yet so little is devoted to investigating our planet's fast disappearing living species.

Yours etc,
LAURENCE MOUND,
Keeper of Entomology,
IAN GAULD,
R. I. VANE-WRIGHT,
The Natural History Museum,
Cromwell Road, SW7.

Pension cost in new perspective

From Mr I. J. Ferguson

Sir, Your report (May 18) that the "landmark ruling" by the European Court of Justice on equal treatment for men and women under occupational pension schemes "could cost British pension funds up to £2 billion a year unless they raise the retirement age of women employees". This £2 billion a year, or the cost of any other improvements to occupational pension schemes demanded by legislation, would bear directly on UK industry which finances the benefits under these schemes.

To some extent, the British Government can plead a lack of control over developments in EC case law, but these developments have been evident for some years now. The same cannot be said for its recent amendments to the 1990 Social Security Bill, awarding full statutory inflation protection to pensioners of up to 5 per cent a year and giving them a prior charge on pension scheme surpluses. However well intentioned and superficially altruistic these may be, they present yet another enormous burden on British industry. I have seen the cost unofficially estimated at £20 billion.

There are many who believe that the major interference in employer action which the Social Security Bill amendments represent will, at long last, precipitate a significant retrenchment in employers' attitudes to final salary pension schemes. This will certainly not benefit pensioners and will almost certainly impose an extra burden on the social security system. Is this what the Government want?

Yours faithfully,
IAN J. FERGUSON (Director),
Reeves Brown Associates Ltd.,
Howard House,
10 Albert Embankment, SE1,
May 23.

From Mrs Judith Denning
Sir, The recent ruling in favour of Mr Barber against Guardian Royal Exchange Assurance (European Law Report, May 18) means that company occupational schemes will now have to bring the pension ages of men and women into line.

It is ironic that this Government, which pontificates on such supposedly held ideals of fairness, equality and democracy, has to be shown what justice is by a European court. The Government still has to make a statement on whether it will bring its own pension scheme into line with what is now the legal situation for companies' pension schemes. We hope that it will not take as long as the Barber case.

Yours faithfully,
JUDITH DENNING (member,
Campaign for Equal State Pension
Ages),
261 Amersham Road,
Hazelmore,
High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire,
May 22.

Newspaper sales

From the Editor of the Irish Independent

Sir, May I direct a mild double tut towards your columnist Charles Wintour and his analysis ("The Press", May 16) of the current newspaper "battle" in Dublin? Even a nodding acquaintance with the end-of-year Audit Bureau of Circulation figures would show the *Irish Independent* circulation at 154,000 and not "about 120,000" as attributed to us by Mr Wintour. In fact, our paper outsells the other two combined.

I have been preaching for years that this is the most competitive city in Europe for the newspaper industry. It was delightful to have my views confirmed by such an eminent practitioner.

Yours sincerely,
VINCENT DOYLE, Editor,
Irish Independent,
90 Middle Abbey Street,
Dublin 1,
Irish Republic,
May 20.

German by numbers

From Mr I. R. Murray

Sir, Accompanying the tape for a German oral examination (one of four tests for the GCSE) telling me how to send it back, are four forms, three in triplicate, plus a two-page memo referring me to two booklets with which I am expected to be familiar: one of 16 pages and one, for course work, which does not relate to this subject. In addition, on my shelf are two "guides to this part of the test", one of 44 pages, one of five, a six-page guide to the writing component and a five-page guide to grading procedures.

The matter of the questions in the examination on the other hand is nothing like as weighty. A sample from the listening test: could the candidate tell from the question of a supermarket assistant how the customer would like his 100 grammes of salmon; name two things you could do in a Munster pub apart from drinking; tick four flavours of ice-cream available in a Konditorei; and finally, and most puzzling of all, why a penfriend's older brother and his friend visited the Reeperbahn in Hamburg.

Could you please tell me what the purpose is of education in German, and how a teacher of German should spend his time.

Yours faithfully,
I. R. MURRAY,
25 Downing Drive,
Greenford,
Middlesex,
May 18.

Is the Conservation farmer — whose methods are neither intensive nor organic — the farmer of the future? Brian James reports

Down on the happy farm

The rift between countrymen and city dwellers has never been wider. "What do these townies think?" snarled a farmer. "That we keep food on their tables with two pet cows, called Daisy and Buttercup?" Meanwhile, supermarket shelves, peering with deep suspicion at meat on the cold shelves, speak darkly about how farms have become bovine dungeons where captive cows are force-fed minced up bits of fellow creatures.

The fears and phobias that have arisen around bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE or "mad cow disease") do not make for balanced discussion. It is a relief, therefore, to talk to Jonathan Blackburn and learn that if not all cows are mad, then nor are all farmers.

The obvious sanity around his meadows at Coombe Court Farm even excluded the other endemic disorders of past weeks: MSS (Mad Scientists' Solutions), typified by the suggestion that in order to fight a disease of still-unknown origin and pathogenesis half of Britain's 15 million cattle should now be slaughtered, and MMS (Mad Ministerial Stunts), exemplified by the sight of the Agriculture Minister force-feeding hamburger to his own young.

Mr Blackburn holds 200 cattle, 400 sheep and uncountable hens and pigs on 300 acres of a meandering valley where Morten Hampstead village gives way to Dartmoor. "Bovine dungeons? Not here. Because I know a better way. And I am only one among many."

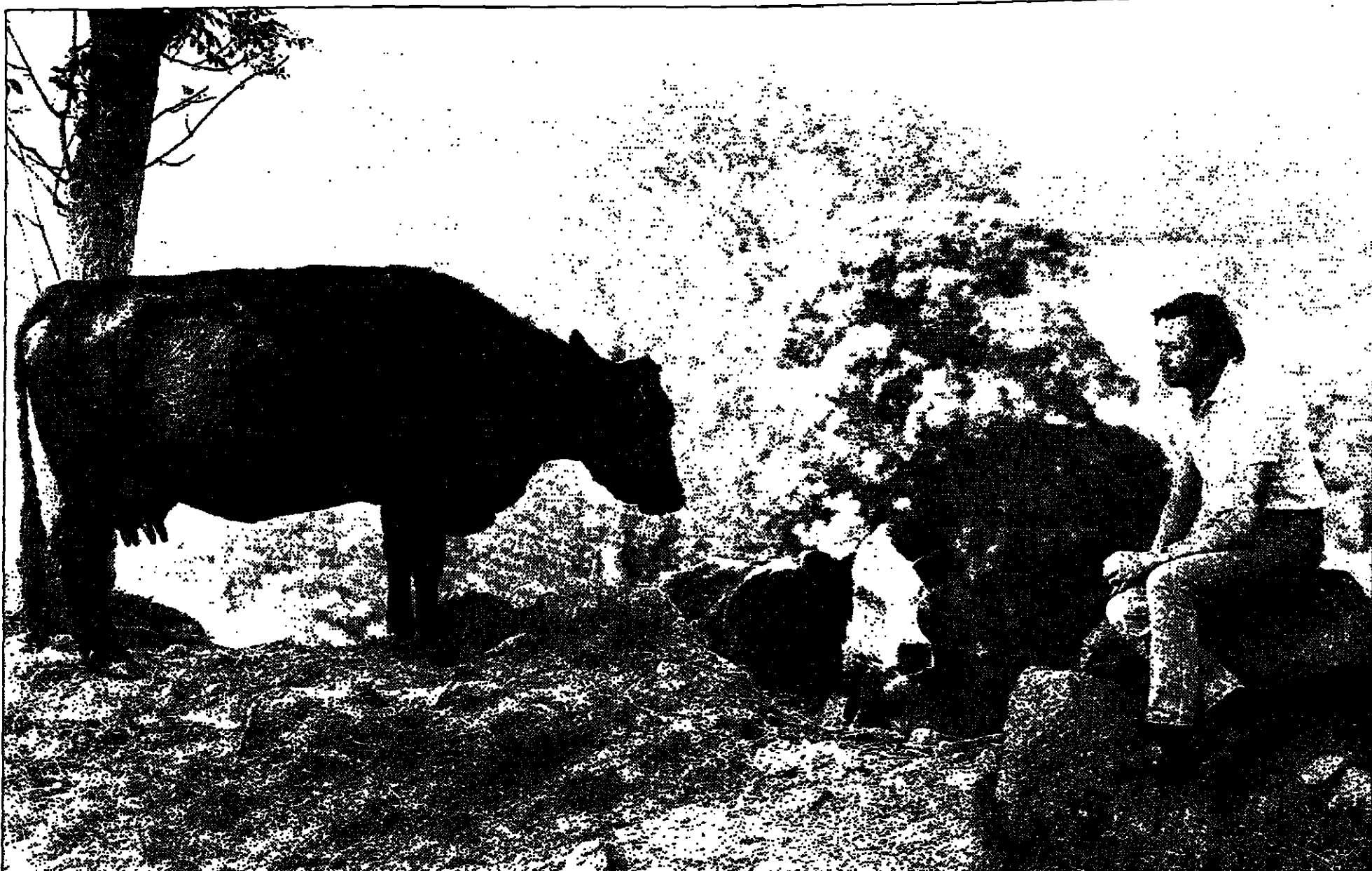
He is one of 400 farmers enrolled in the Guild of Conservation Food Producers, all trying fairly hard not to

feel smug about the fact that not one beast among their herds has gone down with BSE, at present being diagnosed in 600 more animals a month with 14,000 already slaughtered. Nor are they likely to be hit if the spread of the epidemic is traced back to the feeding of cattle with meat from sheep infected with scrapie.

"I do not say that none of my cows will get BSE," Mr Blackburn says carefully, "but if the cause is proved to be sheep meat, then they can never be affected." Part of the well-policed Guild regulation is a prohibition on feeding animal protein to animals. This is in addition to bans on drugs, except as medication in the case of illness, on other than biodegradable pesticides and other than mineral fertilizers, and on the keeping of animals in unnatural conditions.

(There is need here to watch for the symptoms of another current malady: MRC, Mad Rush to Conclusions. Most of the Guild cattle are bred for beef. It is in the longer-living dairy cattle that most, but by no means all, the long-incubating BSE has been detected. Yet this circumstance remains as another item in a growing body of evidence against the past feeding of cattle with dead sheep.)

Mr Blackburn explains how he became involved in the movement. It began with chickens. People would ask if they could have hens and eggs that "tasted like they used to". Then, on a visit to California he saw people queuing for "raw milk, that is what they call unpasteurized milk. I realized people were getting increasingly concerned about what went into things we ate. "I also realized how little I



Reviving the pastoral symphony: Jonathan Blackburn and friends. "The fact is, I knew how much animal feed cost. I knew how far a bag would go. But made from what?"

knew. The fact is, I didn't know what animal feed was. I knew how much it cost. I knew how far a bag would go. But made from what? I started to ask the old boys about the place... what did they use to feed the stock 50 years ago... how could we get back to clean rations?"

In 1986 Mr Blackburn, realizing low-intensity farming could not compete with the rural "factories", opened his own village butcher's shop to sell his meat. People drove from miles around to buy. Another butcher's shop in another town, and a mail-order business spread demand. "Other farmers came

to offer me meat. They told me they also, often without quite knowing why, felt that what they were doing — screwing too much out of the land with fertilizers and chemicals — was just not doing it right."

He looked at organic farming. That did not appeal. "This is the 20th century. If it was not for some chemicals, some antibiotics, some of us would not be here. We give medicine to sick children, why not sick animals? But dependence on chemicals, drug-taking, is something else."

Coupled with this was an economic case. Farming neighbours thought he was mad, with his low stocking

rates (animals per acre), his free-range grazing and determination to use field rotation instead of sprays to keep weeds down. "They would tell me they could get a lamb ready for market in eight weeks. I was taking 14 to 20 weeks. They forgot the £180 per tonne for feed, the chemicals. My input bill was nonexistent, so my sheep cost not a penny more."

Cattle are a little more complicated. "Intensive farmers need 10 months to a year to bring a 550 kilo calf to market. It will have been fed on straw and meal protein — say one-and-a-half tonnes at £200 per tonne — plus growth-

promoting elements and chemicals to make its stomach work more efficiently. The calves are never outdoors, and their buildings are vastly expensive."

"My suckling herds stay out all year. The woods give them winter shelter. The only supplement is hay. They will take two years to finish, and bring only about the same £600 at Exeter market. So my costs must be that bit more."

"But the main difference is I know what has gone into my cattle. The other man cannot. Bagged animal feed can change day to day. A man sits behind a computer at the big feed companies, puts in the today price for various oils, different cereals and all sources of protein: the machine does the sums and tells him what is today's most profitable mixture that meets the specification."

Mr Blackburn dismisses as whimsy the townies' notion that BSE is a visitation. Mother Nature's revenge for man's grisly act in making ruminants eat others, and that farmers, shamefaced, will turn back from this murky lane. "It has to be about efficiency in the end. Edinburgh University estimated that organic methods put up production costs by 25 per cent, and added between 5 and 10 per cent to conservation farming prices. Unit costs will not come below that even with greater volume, because, whether you have 10 cows or 100, nature still takes the same time to ready them for market. We could turn around the entire industry, take every farmer along the way we few have been going, in about three

years. Easily. But first we would have to convince farmers that this is not just a food fad, a fashion. The consumer will have to decide."

Some consumers are deciding already, worried dry-mouthed by evidence that a 250-year-old sheep disease, having leapt one species barrier into cattle, has now extended its reach into cats, mice, antelope and mink and could have the human in its sights.

Two weeks ago the Asda chain of supermarkets (Britain's third largest) began stocking Conservation Grade beef, a decision made a year ago, after Mr Blackburn met Tom Gillon, an Asda executive, at a London food show. Sales interest is such at the six experimental stores that four more will join the trial within the month.

I walked with Mr Gillon on his first visit to Coombe Court. A countryman who began as a butcher's lad and is now his company's controller for meat, he was full of admiration for the sheen on the cows and calves around us. "Why I am so interested in the Guild is that in 1979 I started a livestock scheme with a group of farmers in Scotland. In exchange for a guaranteed market we were able to lay down conditions about the rearing of the cattle, the feed and so on. They, too, have been forbidden animal feed, and have missed BSE. There are more than 150 farmers in that scheme and they now supply a fifth of our beef. I am going up there next week. I think that it would not take much, a few rules about

medicines and so on, to make them into Guild standard. This whole thing is exciting, and yes, I think it is a trend."

Mr Blackburn declines to criticize fellow farmers. "Since the war they have done only what was demanded of them: produce more, turn it out more quickly, more cheaply. Like me, most farmers had no idea what went into the feeds. They supposed experts would have judged them safe, and nothing was bad if it did the job more cheaply."

What about artificial growth hormones (banned since 1988)? "I have nothing to say about hormones whatsoever." Which is what most athletes used to say when asked about rivals' use of steroids. But the number of random hormone-tests conducted by Ministry of Agriculture vets suggests that cows don't have to jump over the moon today to be under as much suspicion as Olympic hurdlers.

Mr Blackburn is less forgiving about John Gummer, the Agriculture Minister, and his advisers. He shares supermarket shoppers' disbelief that sheep offal should still be given to pigs and poultry, and offal from the calves of diseased cows still given to humans, while no one knows if BSE can be passed on.

"To think as we do does not involve making farm animals into pets," Mr Blackburn says. "I don't have cows called Daisy or Buttercup. But I do know them well enough to see when they are out of sorts. I do know which calf comes from which cow. And I know what has gone inside every one of them."

Driving Miss Daisy to a safe and useful end

DAISY is eight months old and a beautiful blonde and, although her behaviour appeared markedly odd the other day, as far as anyone can tell she is normal.

Daisy is a Charollais-cross who was bought as a 10-day-old calf last October. I have kept the usual menagerie of household pets before, but never a cow. Strictly speaking, of course, I don't keep Daisy either; she boards at a nearby farm. I pay for her food and veterinary bills, and try to look in at important moments.

Eventually, rather than selling her for fattening as beef in a year or so, I want to put her to the bull and let her calve. I don't want her milk yield to be artificially boosted, and I want her to graze on rich summer grass and feed in winter on farm silage or hay. The aim is merely to observe a domestic farm animal experiencing a full, natural life cycle.

When Daisy was let out to grass for the first time with the other cows, she charged around and kicked up her heels in glee before coming to rest, snorting and wild-eyed, under a giant may tree. It was then the thought struck me. Were these manic displays portents of doom? Could Daisy possibly be incubating BSE, passed on *in utero*?

Were Daisy to end up on the butcher's slab she would probably do so at around three to four years old. According to BBC's recent *Horizon* programme, infected animals tend not to show signs of mad cow disease until they are about five years old, and until then can appear perfectly normal. Daisy could theoretically walk up the path to the abattoir without anyone suspecting what her brain might

Why an animal lover visited an abattoir and started eating meat again

be harbouring. The question presented itself: if it came to the worst, and Daisy were undetectably diseased, how safe for the consumer are slaughtering methods? Gaining admission to a slaughterhouse in these troubled times is not easy. The owner of one of the 10 per cent of British abattoirs operating to EC standards (mandatory by 1992) is also a farmer and retail butcher. He stresses that other abattoirs also have high standards, and says he would dearly love to go public and condemn inaccurate claims about slaughterhouse methods which have heightened BSE fears.

He was particularly annoyed by reports that brain tissue from split cows' heads, if infected, could splatter red meat carcasses. The law demands that brains should be removed from bovines and therefore from the food chain. All abattoirs are entitled to do this, but in practice most do not. "Ox heads go out under licence to specific head-boning plants," the butcher said. Carcasses are presented for splitting minus their heads.

An Official Veterinary Surgeon (OVS), representing the local health authority, was present on the slaughterhouse floor to monitor each carcass within minutes of death. At the start of the day of my visit a consignment of lambs bound for the Continent was

being slaughtered; pigs and cattle would follow. Everything was incredibly clean, quick, and virtually odour-free. Edible offal was subjected to intense study for signs of previous pneumonia, or parasitic infections such as fluke. Lymph glands were cut open and minutely examined. In the event of anything abnormal, every part is inspected further; condemned meat is stained black and removed to a special, locked room. Only when an OVS, or a meat inspector, is satisfied about every bit of an animal is it stamped fit for human consumption.

This may be some way from the centre of the current dilemma, but the thoroughness in areas not of immediate concern was all the more reassuring. Yet what about the use of band-saws to remove spinal cords — another operation that has led to anxiety about BSE contamination? I saw a neatly split backbone on a beef carcass whose spinal cord had been pulled cleanly through, to be immediately discarded with other banned offal. It didn't make sense to adopt a "chainsaw massacre" approach to valuable beef.

As a professed animal lover and certainly, of late, less of a red meat eater, I did find myself alarmed — but only by my own apparent desensitization; I was not disturbed by animals lying peacefully in clean pens, with plenty of fresh water, but about to die. Had it been Daisy, I don't think I would have felt very much more concerned. On the way home, I bought porterhouse steak for dinner and, in all conscience and confidence, thoroughly enjoyed it.

SANDY BISP.

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Style games: from left, "Gorgeous Gussy" Moran, in the lace-trimmed knickers designed by Ted Tinling, Anne White in body stocking, and Zina Garrison, in scalloped dress

Wimbledon, still dressing to frill

In an age when Technicolor logos, fluorescent pink Lycra cycling shorts and flamboyant Minnehaha headbands dominate the international tennis courts, the sport of serving up such sartorial high-lob as frilly knickers or a sequined slip dress in any major championship might seem distinctly tame. The last volley of disapproval from player and referee at the All England Lawn Tennis Club at Wimbledon on the subject of dress was as long ago as 1985, when the body-moulding catsuit worn by American tennis player Anne White was called out. The official reason given? It was thought to be too blatant a publicity stunt and her opponent Pam Shriver found it off-putting.

Ted Tinling, the champion of every innovation in tennis dress, who died on Wednesday, did not approve of Miss White's catsuit either. But the reasons he gave were typically precise. "It was bleak," he said. "What was needed was the ham frill, the softening touch of something around the bottom."

Forty five years after Mr Tinling invented his most famous "softening touch", the length of lace he gathered into a frill to attach to the knickers worn by the tennis star "Gorgeous Gussy" Moran under a satin-trimmed jersey tennis dress he had designed for her, tennis clothes have turned full circle, through the outrageous back to the demure. Both the low-slung hipster hotpants

and spangled knickers of the 1970s, and the tough, efficient shorts and neat-collared polo shirts of the 1980s, have been rejected in favour of a softer, yet equally practical, sporty style of graceful pleated skirt and sleeveless top.

Diana Donovan, a regular partner of the Princess of Wales at the Vanderbilt Club in West London, says that aggressively sporty clothes are out. "Well-cut skirts with labels like Ellesse, Fila and Tacchini, that sit comfortably at the waist and cover the bottom even while serving an ace are *de rigueur*," she says. White is the rule for tournament play although many players practice in navy, pink or blue. "Chrissie Evert seems to get the look right," Mrs Donovan says. "Pretty and efficient."

Exhibitionism in dress does not seem to work in opposite ratio to talent. One of the noisiest dressers on court today is the American player, Zina Garrison, who, wearing scalloped frills and vibrant colours (toned down for Wimbledon) was powerful enough to slam her way into fifth place in international rankings.

We are unlikely to know how Andre Agassi, another flamboyant American player, would modify his customary bright fluorescent pink, black and white striped shirt, and black denim shorts layered over shocking pink glossy cycling shorts, for the scrutiny of senior officials at the British Lawn Tennis Associ-

As tennis says
goodbye to Ted
Tinling, Liz Smith
looks at changing
fashions
on the court

ation. He has not played at Wimbledon since 1987.

The dress code at Wimbledon is that tennis clothes must be "predominantly white" (two-thirds white to be precise). The size of promotional logos is governed by television advertising rules. Distinctive design motifs can be developed and promoted by the smart manufacturer. When Monica Seles recently beat Steffi Graf, Fila's half-circle pattern was eminently visible on her tennis dress. Rules about shoes are determined by common sense. None are allowed to tear up the court.

Throughout his 50 years as courtier to the top tennis stars, Mr Tinling's only considerations in design remained comfort and glamour. He was inspired by a very angry race indeed. Air traffic controllers' disputes are becoming as much a part of a Bank Holiday as traffic jams. Complaints about delays, ticket problems, schedules, baggage, in-flight service and safety that land on the doormats of individual airlines, the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and the Air Transport Users Committee (AUC) are all soaring. In their 1989 report, the AUC's only cause for optimism was a slowdown in the rate of complaints about baggage handling.

Excess baggage in the cabin

Obese air passengers are providing new cause for complaint by fellow travellers

Sir Richard Burton, the explorer, said that "travellers, like poets, are mostly an angry race". Travellers who go by aircraft are becoming a very angry race indeed. Air traffic controllers' disputes are becoming as much a part of a Bank Holiday as traffic jams.

Complaints about delays, ticket problems, schedules, baggage, in-flight service and safety that land on the doormats of individual airlines, the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and the Air Transport Users Committee (AUC) are all soaring. In their 1989 report, the AUC's only cause for optimism was a slowdown in the rate of complaints about baggage handling.

Whether it stems from frustration at delays (which seem increasingly inevitable), or fear of flying, or over-generous tipping in the departure lounge, there is something about flying which fills rational people with malice. Prejudices activate the instant the wheels leave the ground. Within minutes even the sweetest liberal will dream of launching a petition to have that screaming baby caged in a sound-proof box in the hold, or of amputating, without anaesthetic, the legs of the abnormally tall and bony basketball player in the seat behind.

Now the Americans have uncovered another cause for complaint: obese passengers. Air Delta recently received a complaint from a passenger "forced" to sit out the flight on a folding seat because of the bulk of his neighbour.

impressable age of 13½," he said. "I watched her because she was so goddamned good and glamorous. Women wore starry sports clothes in those days, but her silk dresses were practically see-through." Mr Tinling cut a dashing figure himself: almost 6ft 6in tall, with his sleek, sun-bronzed head invariably sporting a diamond in one ear, and a bracelet or two on his wrists. For a life spent travelling 45 weeks out of 52, he had his suits tailored (in Savile Row) in drip-dry fabrics. One favourite suit had been laser-cut and custom-made for him in Indianapolis. He was dyslexic and had little education during his childhood in the South of France. He was sent to learn fashion design in London in 1927. Between 1935 and 1950 he played regularly on the amateur circuit and liaised between committee and players at Wimbledon; it was inevitable he would specialize in designing sportswear.

Ian Barnes, of the International Tennis Federation, remembers how Ted Tinling put Rosie Casals into black sequins for the American Virginia Slims tournaments in the mid 1970s, and created the sassy Stars and Stripes dresses with flags on the pockets for the Wightman Cup stars. "Everybody learnt from Ted. He masterminded all that blarney of the early 1970s. Recently he had softened the style and gone back to pale colours and much more white."

Mr Tinling's design philosophy followed the simple principle that any woman player who does not want to look like a gym mistress should avoid tailored separates. "Even a ladies' double in the local club is quite a macho game these days. It is a great mistake to match a thrusting style of play with an outfit consisting of shorts and shirts," he once said.

In his search for comfort in tennis clothes, he had pioneered man-made fibres and developed finishes as sleek inside as out. One favourite fabric, Fantessa, was developed by J.P. Stevens with cotton inside for comfort and a synthetic outside. "My stars must look good hot and bothered. Creases are hell," he said in 1986 when the Victoria & Albert Museum staged an exhibition of his tennis creations to celebrate the centenary of the Wimbledon championships.

One arm and shoulder of every tennis player is naturally more muscular than the other, a point considered by Mr Tinling in every creation. The cause of one of John McEnroe's obsessive mannerisms, the habit of tugging at the sleeve of his tennis shirt, was sympathetically diagnosed by Mr Tinling. It was simply, he said, the cut and quality of the cloth. "I am very good on anatomy. I have to be to design clothes for action," he used to say. "The movements of a good tennis player are as beautiful as those of an ice skater or ballerina."

What price the painter Prince?

Lithographs of watercolours by the Prince of Wales are on sale at £2,600 each. Who clinched the deal?

In her early days in the fine art business, Anna Hunter was rash enough to tell her three children that whenever she sold a print they could go to McDonald's to celebrate.

Her latest coup — publishing a series of limited-edition lithographs of the Prince of Wales's watercolours — means she will have to rethink the offer. The first, Wensleydale from Moorcock, only goes on public view today at the Bath Contemporary Art Fair but the calls are already coming in particularly from America and Japan where, Ms Hunter says, "they seem to regard him as a deity".

The Prince never sells his originals, and such a replica, approved and initialed by him C90, and embossed with the Prince of Wales Feathers, is about as near as it is possible to get to owning one.

"There is no doubt that he is a very much admired and liked character," Ms Hunter says. "So I think they will be bought by people who have to cash in their granny bonds to get one as well as by those who can easily afford it."

The Prince is, she believes, a good artist. "I showed his work to Carol Weight who taught people such as Hockney, and who is the father of a whole generation of British artists, and he said that the Prince is very talented. He thinks his work shows freshness, a very good sense of composition and a wonderful use of colour and texture."

At £2,600 each, plus VAT, the 295 prints in this edition are, she admits, rather pricey. "It's almost impossible to price something like this, but we did seek the advice of the major auction houses."

Ms Hunter, aged 37, and her business partner, Guy Thompson, will make some money from the sales, but most of the price — the artist's royalties — will go to the Prince's Charities Trust. It was this proposal which Ms Hunter outlined to the Prince when she wrote to him "on some very classy notepaper and in my best handwriting. The puns at my convent school always said it would pay off."

She also offered the services of the lithographer, Stanley Jones, who worked with Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth. The Prince's agreement led to a series of meetings, including a trip to Urbino, in Italy, where his

watercolours are on show.

"I can't say I felt terribly nervous or over-awed, even at the beginning. I think it was because one of my artists was so crusty and difficult that I used to quake in my shoes whenever I went to see him. I thought 'Prince Charles can't be as difficult as that'. And, of course, he was charming and enthusiastic and very interested in the whole project."

It was an achievement for someone who started in fine art only two years ago. At that time, Ms Hunter was compiling a celebrity cookbook for the NSPCC and had persuaded more than 100 famous people to give her their favourite recipes. In her search for illustrators she met Ruskin Spear.

"When I went to his home I asked how much his oils were and he said between £5,000 and £20,000. I thought 'I have loads of friends who would love to have one of your pictures on their walls but who have other things to pay for'. I thought I had seen a gap in the market."

She was also in the middle of a divorce and desperate for work she could do from home. Though she had been an economics teacher she was determined not to go back to the classroom. Instead, she organized a set of prints of Spear's work which pleased him and led to introductions to fellow Royal Academicians.

She took a quick business course at Cranfield School of Management, got a £40-a-week Manpower Services Commission grant, and turned her five-bedroom Victorian house and conservatory in Epsom into a sort of lived-in gallery. Even today there are still piles of prints "fired" behind the grand piano. Her children James, aged 12, Laura, aged 10, and Sebastian, aged seven, remain interested in and involved in her business.

In some ways, she thinks, the personal difficulties that surrounded the business's beginnings may have contributed to its success. "It came out of the most troubled time of my life and it was something for me to focus on at the time and also a goal for the future. It was very therapeutic. And I was, perhaps, able to deal with the frailties of artists better than if I had been someone for whom everything had always gone well."

LIZ GILL



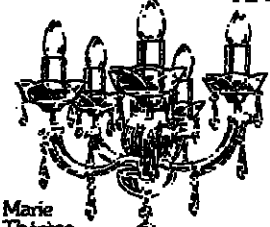
Picture of success: Anna Hunter with a princely lithograph

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Jonathan Meades, restaurant writer of the year, ponders the difference between expensive bargains and cheap rip-offs

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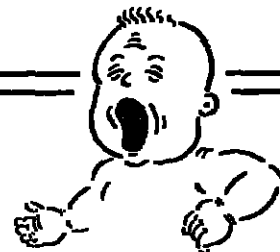
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Trumpeting our unsung masters

A minor master can be a major discovery, John Russell Taylor argues, after seeing exhibitions in Brighton and in London

The very words strike a chill: "This minor master, for so he must be reckoned...". In this case they figure prominently in the curator's introduction to the show of Cloughton Pellet's work at Hove Museum and Art Gallery (19 New Church Road, 0273 779410) until June 3. So snobbish are we that we must immediately wonder why anyone should bother to give an artist, who lived from 1890 to 1966, and is now almost completely forgotten, such a substantial showing in the first place — let alone then taking the show to London (in a much reduced form) and King's Lynn.

This sort of snobbery is likely to be joined by a certain hypocrisy. What we seem to require, to quieten our doubts, is for someone else to say that the artist is an

undiscovered genius: nothing but major figures will do, even if we reserve the right to argue such claims once made. But Timothy Wilcox is perfectly right: Pellet is a minor master, though a master nonetheless, and that does not diminish the pleasure and sense of discovery many will take in encountering his art.

The show is by far the most interesting thing, on the visual side, about this year's Brighton Festival, given that *Landscapes from a High Latitude*, the show of Icelandic art already seen in London, has unfortunately been split between two venues, thereby losing a lot of its coherence.

Pellet touches on a number of interesting and unexpected aspects of English art between the wars — unexpected, at least, in combination. He became a great friend of Paul Nash at the Slade,

and then of John Nash; there is certainly something of Paul Nash's mystic aura around a number of his English rural scenes. But while Nash laid himself open to the effects of international modernism, Pellet continued to plough an unmistakably English furrow. The most pronounced foreign influence he underwent was from the Florentine Quattrocento, which burst on him during his first visit to Italy in 1912. As a result of this we find, alongside the Palmerish and the early-Spencerish work, some religious subjects which look a lot more like Cayley Robinson and such recently rediscovered Birmingham artists as Joseph Southall and Arthur Gaskin.

As the Twenties progressed, he brought these disparate elements together in a clearly personal style. He also took up wood-engraving, and it is as a wood-engraver that he has, up to now, been remembered. But his paintings, though neglected, are far from negligible. "The Train" (1920), which belongs to Hove, is one of the most popular pictures in the collection. One can see why: its very English blend of strangeness and cohesiveness, as of an illustration for Massfield's *The Box of Delights*, immediately touches a chord in the folk-memory, one which is sounded over and over again in his prints of starry nights and transfiguring sunsets and dawns. There is a touch of Traherne's ecstasy before nature here, but there is also discipline in the vision.

Patrick Hayman comes into the same "small master" category, but he is, nevertheless, the subject of a substantial South Bank touring



Something of a mystic aura: one of Cloughton Pellet's English rural scenes from the exhibition now at Hove

show which begins at the Camden Arts Centre (Arkwright Road, London NW3, 081-435 2643) until June 17 — after which it goes to Exeter, Bath, Wakefield and Worthing.

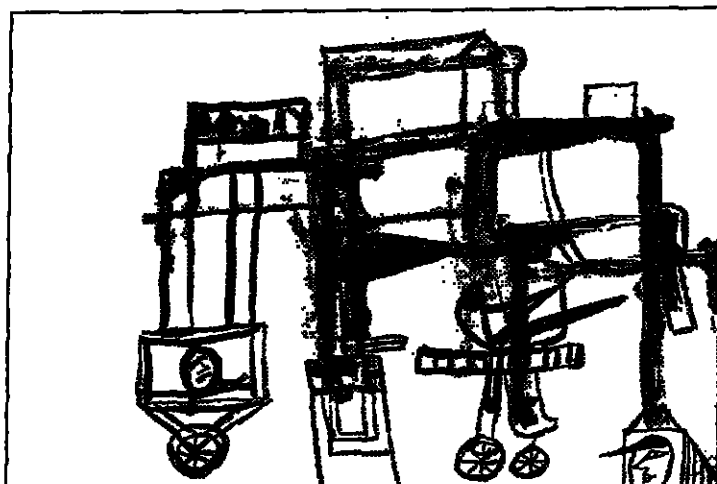
Hayman died in 1988, and this memorial show is the first large retrospective he has had in this country, though there was a similar show in Canada in 1985.

Hayman is a minor master, if he is accounted a master at all. But he also has the makings of a cult painter, wending his own way to the point of total eccentricity. Though he was highly sophisticated in the ways of modern art, and edited the distinguished magazine, *The Painter and Sculptor*, from 1958 to 1963, in his own work he often assumes the child-like draughtsmanship of the primitive. This is, of course, hardly unprecedented in the annals of modern art, where the concept of "art brut" has been strongly influential. But Hayman's peculiarity in this context is that he seems totally devoid of that irritating false-naïveté which vitiates so much 20th-century neo-primitivism. If he thinks, and then draws lines around his thoughts, that is because he has really managed to maintain a certain innocence (not to be confused with ignorance) in a world of grubby experience.

He also has his own private mythology. The same images constantly, mysteriously recur. There is the bearded, rabbinical figure on the seashore, frequently involved in what seem to be wedding ceremonies. There are the little boats on the sea, reminiscent of the works of that genuine Cornish primitive, Alfred Wallis. There are crucifixions, generally placed in an uncompromisingly modern context, juxtaposed with cars and aeroplanes. There are planes (rickety, old-fashioned propeller jobs) combined with, in one memorably bizarre instance, a self-portrait where the propeller ought to be. And along with all this there are wolves and other wild animals roaming the landscape, giving one

a sense akin to that we receive in a lot of David Jones's work, of the present lying easily on top of a many-layered past. It would be difficult to claim, even for David Jones, a major importance, as has been done for another private mythologist and mystic, Cecil Collins, whom Hayman sometimes faintly resembles. So I do not think it incumbent upon me to trumpet Hayman as a towering figure of the century, just in order to get him some attention. Minor he may be, but it is not about time we were able, without embarrassment, to applaud the minor masters?

JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR



"Derelict Days", by Patrick Hayman, at Camden Arts Centre

CRITICS' CHOICE: ART, EXHIBITIONS AND AUCTIONS

ART EXHIBITIONS

BAWDY BARRIERS: Keith McIntyre's paintings for Jack Tamson's *Barricade*, a play commissioned for Glasgow's Cultural Year, have the expected new Glasgow grotesquerie; more powerful than life-size.

RASB GALLERY: 6 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1 (071-828 2588). Mon-Fri, 10.30am-7pm, Sat, 11am-6pm (closed May 28), until June 9.

BRITISH CLASSIC: Matthew Smith's dazblers are more honoured than looked at these days. A strong selection of 30 paintings.

CRANE KALMAN: 178 Grafton Road, London SW3 (071-584 7558). Mon-Fri, 10am-6pm, Sat, 10am-4pm, until July 21.

EXTRAVAGANZA: Leslie Hurry achieved most fame for his surrealist designs for ballet and drama in the 1940s. These are what still chiefly impress in a timely tribute.

FESTIVAL HALL: London, SE1 (071-928 8800). Daily, 10am-10pm, until June 10.

RITUALS: N.H. (Tony) Shubing is now 68, achieved fame in the 1950s and has continued painting his own way ever since. Much play with hand-prints.

ENGLAND & CO: 14 Needham Road, London W11 (071-221 0417). Tues-Sat, 11am-6pm, until June 1.

DISCIPLE: Philip Moyssey was Kokoschka's first English pupil, and the influence shows right up to the present. Confident and colourful; you can see

why Kokoschka admired him. **Bourne Gallery:** 31-33 Lesborne Road, Reigate, Surrey (0737 241614). Mon-Fri, 10am-5.30pm, Wed, 10am-1pm (closed May 28), until June 9.

TRAILBLAZERS: Either you find Graham Ibbeson's caricatural sculptures insufferably vulgar, or you warm to them as to Donald McGill. Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Sirett Hall, Wakefield (0224 630302). Daily, 10am-6pm, until September 7.

LONDON GREEN: Even if you are not particularly interested in gardens, there is plenty of art in the London's Pride show to justify a visit. Tissot and other Victorian specialists recommended. Museum of London, 150 London Wall, London EC2 (071-400 3699). Tues-Sat, 10am-6pm, Sun, 2-6pm (open May 28), until August 12.

DELICATE BALANCE: Hard to see how Jennifer Lee's subtly off-centre pots stand up straight, but they do. Colours and textures exquisite. **Galerie Benson:** 15 Royal Arcade, 28 Old Bond Street, London W1 (071-491 1705). Tues-Fri, 10am-6.30pm, Sat, 10am-12.30pm, until June 1.

MODERN MASTERS: As grand a collection of works by the modern classics, from Bonnard to Balfray, as you could wish to see. **Royal Academy of Arts:** Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1 (071-439 7439). Daily, 10am-6pm, until July 15.

JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR

AUCTIONS, SALES

A MILLION PLUS: A famous collection of English ceramics is poised to enter the saleroom record books. The Rous Lench holding concentrates on gems from the great names.

CHRISTIE'S: King Street, St James's (071-839 9000). Viewing (some lots): Tues, 9am-4pm. Sale: Tues, 10am and 2.30pm, Wed, 10.30am and 2.30pm.

WINE: Red burgundy "En Primeur" from the superb 1988 vintage straight from France. Four producers, who all follow the organic approach, offer their stock together with wine from other private cellars.

SCHUBERT'S 34/35 New Bond Street, London W1 (071-493 8080). Sale: Wed, 10.30am and 2.30pm.

ART POTS: A Marinovs bird, Moorcroft bowls and vases, Royal Doulton and a large range of character jugs among these art ceramics. **Bonhams:** Montpelier Street, Knightsbridge, London SW7 (071-584 9161). Sale: today, 11am and 2pm.

PAYNTER'S PRIZE: Cricket ball which Eddie Paynter hit out of Brisbane cricket ground to score six runs that won both match and Ashes against Australia in 1933. Also included in this sporting sale is Lord Mountbatten's library of polo books (£10,000-£15,000). **Christie's:** South Kensington, 65 Old Brompton Road, London SW7 (071-581 7671). Viewing: Tues and Wed, 9am-5pm. Sale: June 1, 10.30am.

HOUSE AND GARDEN: Furniture for the weekend cottage. Windsor armchairs, dining tables and sideboards. Rosewood bookcase and, say, auctioneers, 20 lots of good curtains. Stone garden ornaments for outside.

Taylor and Fletcher: High Street, Bouton-on-the-Water, Gloucestershire (0451-20913). Sale: tomorrow, 10am.

CHINESE: Local deceased estates have yielded their treasures including Chinese hardwood furniture and glass, and a selection of Nanhai porcelain in this general sale which also has a turn-of-the-century three-wheel milkman's barrow (£200).

Bigwood: The Old School, Tiddington, Stratford-upon-Avon (0789 68415). Sale: today, 11am.

RAILWAY MANIA: Royal memorabilia and old railway items from Wolferton Station Museum at Sandringham, North Norfolk.

Geoffrey Collins: 17 Blackfriars Street, Kings Lynn (0553 774135). Viewing: today, 10am-6.30pm and tomorrow, 8.30am-9.30am. Property split into two sales: tomorrow, 10am and 2pm. Both sales will be held at Marsh Farm, Wolferton (near station).

ORIENTAL: Eastern rugs, runners and carpets featured here at estimates from £60 among antique and reproduction furniture. **Phillips:** 65 George Street, Edinburgh (031 225 2269). Sale: today, 11am.

JOHN SHAW

TELEVISION

Bravo, little wizard of Oz

CUDDLY as a killer koala, arch as the Admiralty, balding as Yul Brynner, Clive James is the back that got away. An overnight tele-scribbler like the rest of us, he somehow translated himself into a bigger star than most of the unfortunate he once reviewed. **Barry Norman** has achieved the same kind of transcendence, and Herbert Kretzmer now makes more money out of *Les Misérables* than most of the lyricists of other shows he had spent half a lifetime reviewing. Critics do not like other critics becoming superstars. Let alone millionaires. It is like watching a brother monk opening a Michelin restaurant; somehow simultaneously very envious and vaguely unsettling.

But the real trouble with James is that he is as good at the new job as he was at the old. His *Postcard from Rome* (BBC 1) should be forcibly shown to every maker of every travel programme, if only because it had clearly been written as well as photographed.

From its opening recreation of the helicopter prelude to *La Dolce Vita*, it was evident that we were

in for the usual mix of film-buffery, self-deprecation and Australian panic. "I told the pilot it was my first helicopter flight over Rome. He told me it was his first anywhere."

Extras in James documentaries always appear to have had their dialogue written by the little wizard of Oz: cab drivers behave like Ben Hur, girls on white motorbikes insult him, the Pope waves on cue. All the old jokes were here: "You never saw such a seductive swing to the hips, such perfectly judged accessories, and some of the women are like that too."

But the idea of Artista the Hun being still denigrated by Romans for wearing the wrong tie to massacres neatly summarized Italian tailoring *machismo* through the ages, and to see James being fitted for a spirit-liberating suit by a man once apparently in charge of Gorbachov's wardrobe was to understand the true meaning of sartorial discomfort.

Prolonged discussions of the Pope's inside-leg measurements (74cm, knowledge is power) were

followed by more traffic jokes and then an unusual lurch into boredom as James got a lesson in charisma from a veteran charmer. By now, the movie references had shifted from *La Dolce Vita* to *Let's Make Love*, but we finally got back on course with James, trying to pick up girls in a cafe where Keats had almost died, presumably while trying to find a waiter.

One or two of the brief-encounter sequences are now looking dangerously rehearsed, but there is still something deeply attractive in the image of an extremely small Australian who appears to have had his head somehow compacted into his chest trying to turn himself into a Fellini hero from the 1950s.

One day, if there is any justice, thousands of games-playing Japanese viewers will watch Clive's programmes and laugh uproariously at the antics of the foreigner. Meanwhile, the revelation of the night was that of Mussolini's pianist-son recalling old Benito's obsession with Fats Waller. Today the world, tomorrow the jazz.

SHERIDAN MORLEY

CLASSICAL MUSIC

Tuneful tampering

The urge to "improve" other people's writing is one of those fundamental impulses which keeps the world of journalism turning round merrily. It is no less rampant an infection in the musical world, where sub-editors are called arrangers, transcribers, orchestrators or — if they fail to acknowledge their original sources — plagiarists.

Big players are involved in this game. Mozart did it to Handel, which was poetic justice because Handel pinched from all his contemporaries. Stravinsky did it to Pergolesi — adding insult to injury by declaring that no one would have heard of Pergolesi if he (Stravinsky) had not turned Pergolesi into *Fulcinella*. Not true now, and probably not true then.

Schumann's orchestration was deemed so incompetent that almost everyone — but most notoriously Mahler — touched up his symphonies. Again, history has proved the meddling wrong. Bernard Haitink recorded the Schumann symphonies in their unexpurgated orchestrations, and made them work beautifully.

Generally, musicians tamper for one of three reasons. They may have a utilitarian motive: for example, they may have at their disposal fewer or different instruments from those specified by the composer. Or they may be fired by a missionary zeal, wishing an old work to be enjoyed anew.

Or, most interestingly, the intention may be to create something new out of old material. The classic of this particular genre is Berio's *Sinfonia*, which uses a movement from Mahler's Second Symphony as a back-cloth to a surreal conversation-piece. Similarly, Robin Holloway's opera *Clarissa* (given its world premiere last week at the London Coliseum) uses sizable chunks of Wagner to signify something portentous, though no one seems sure what.

Three highly stimulating London Sinfonietta programmes this week at the Queen Elizabeth Hall

are exploring this theme. Last Saturday's concert contained the British premiere of Schoenberg's arrangement of Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*, and tomorrow, Schoenberg's arrangement of Mahler's *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* can be heard.

These are fascinating exercises. Between 1909 (when Mahler wrote *Das Lied*) and 1918 (when Schoenberg began his arrangement for chamber ensemble) the musical world had diminished. The war had brought austerity to the music business: there was no money to employ vast orchestras. Yet Schoenberg wanted his own contemporaries to know *Das Lied*.

There is also a sense of one composer exploring the mind of another, making his own discoveries of Mahler's secrets explicit to us by emphasizing them in unusual orchestral colours. The luxurious sweep of massed-string sound is missing. Instead there is an analytical directness in the timbres, which has the effect of exposing the audacity of Mahler's harmonies.

Alfreda Hodgson and Robert Tear were the soloists, struggling at times, but thoroughly impassioned. David Atherton conducted immaculately.

In the second concert was another arrangement: the world premiere of Three Piano Pieces, Op. 59, by Nielsen, in an energetic "recomposition" for 10 instruments by a present-day Dane, Hans Abrahamsen — known to me only by the fact that he once wrote an orchestral piece called *Skum*. Abrahamsen has a vivid, individualist way of using instruments, as his own piece, energetic *Marchenbilder*, subsequently showed.

The first concert also contained recent Danish music: Anders Nordentoft's 1985 piece *Enigegen*, which sounded depressingly like rehearsed Steve Reich minimalism at first, then suddenly expanded onto a more ambitious canvas.

RICHARD MORRISON

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ARTS

ROCK

Understated, and as innocent as ever

Deborah Harry
University of East
Anglia

FOR Deborah Harry time has almost stood still. Apart from having escaped the ravages of advancing middle age, her music is locked in a specific era: those shimmering twilight months during which the excesses of punk lapsed into an unselfconscious period of new wave pop. A period which yielded classic collections of melodies such as Elvis Costello's *Armed Forces* and Blondie's *Paralytic Love*, not to mention her previous album, the underrated *Plastic Letters*.

In those days, Blondie was deemed to be very much a vehicle for the facially flawless Ms Harry. Twelve years on she is touring under her own name, which is ironic since the band sounds more like Blondie than ever.

To her left on stage at Norwich was close friend and continuing collaborator Chris Stein, the only other ex-Blondie member. He sports a more flattering haircut these days, and his occasional guitar solos were a delight, owing more than a little to the spunky style of fellow New York veteran, Bob Dylan, whose minimal approach has graced recent albums by Lou Reed and Lloyd Cole.

On keyboards was a newcomer, Valerie Ghent, whose bright chords and runs introduced a

sense of fairground frivolity to the proceedings.

As for the rhythm section, it chugged along as if drum machines had never happened, occasionally sounding like a somewhat irritating, rather like being served pudding instead of soufflé. On the other, it provided an air of happy amateurism, always a key part of the Harry persona. She looked stunning in a three-piece rust-coloured outfit, fetching off round about the knee. The singer soon discarded the outer layer with a tongue-in-cheek excuse about the heat. This combination of guile and apparent innocence has always stood Harry in good stead and is probably the essence of her sex appeal, along with her lazy vocal delivery, which operates to such fine effect on songs like "The Tide is High" and "End of the Run", from last year's *Def, Dumb and Blonde* album.

Considering that Harry was the role model for such twaddly successors as Madonna and Transvision Vamp's Wendy James, her image and movements remain remarkably understated. This perhaps explains why she was so warmly received by female as well as male admirers. Despite the simplicity of the music, from old cuts such as "Heart of Glass" to the new single "Maybe for Sure", she exudes a faint air of mystery guaranteed to captivate the listener.

MIKE NICHOLLS

David Toop meets Canadian country singer k.d.lang

A woman who favours the use of lower-case letters for her name rather than capitals, k.d.lang claims to have given up intellectualizing country music. She has wrestled with the contradictions of being described as a New Traditionalist and has found herself locked in a paradox. Different as they are, singers such as herself, Randy Travis, Dwight Yoakam and K.T. Oslin are modernizing country music by reviving the past. "I want to protect and love it," lang says, "but I don't want to see it suffocate."

Suffocation seemed the most likely fate for mainstream country until the new generation of singers appeared. In the early Sixties, the so-called Countrypolitan productions of Owen Bradley, Chet Atkins and Billy Sherrill added strings and vocal groups to basic country, and set the controls for a slow drift towards mainstream acceptance. One of the negative aspects of this acceptance has been a loss of the music's individuality.

Lang rejects this drift. An aspect of country that first attracted her was the art of the pedal-steel guitar and the experimental bravado of its players. Now she employs Greg Leisz, one of the best remaining steel-guitarists.

Lang is a Canadian, born in Edmonton, but she grew up in Consort, Alberta, a farming community of only 650 people, where the main social activity was drinking beer in a half-truck on a Saturday night. Country music was all around her, but she studied classical music and listened to Broadway songs, rock and rhythm 'n' blues. Later she moved back to Edmonton and dabbled in performance art. Having been inspired by The Sex Pistols, she finally discovered that she had loved country music all along. "The discovery of it," she says, "was really my seeing that it paralleled the values and morals that were instilled in me by growing up in Consort. I grew to appreciate them."

Performance art helped her to understand the kitsch element of country music: the rhinestones, the larger-than-life characters and the extravagant taste of poor people who have become suddenly rich. Her rural upbringing balanced this view with an understanding of what she describes as the true value of country music. "The thing that attracts me to country music," she says, "is the need for the humanistic response, and dealing with the basic human emotions of loving, cheating and feeling."

Lang is a strong and emotional singer who loves good songs. "Music doesn't allow you to sing much any more," she says. "Country music is one of the few places a singer can really let go. I wish pop music would go back to when Ella

and Peggy and all those people were singing."

Shadowland, her second album, demonstrated her capacity to use, but re-invent, country music's history. Its dreamy, four-in-the-morning atmosphere was pronounced enough to suggest a touch of performance art in its conception. Recorded in Tennessee, produced by Owen Bradley and played by some of Nashville's finest veteran musicians for an authentic recreation of the early Sixties country-pop sound, it became one of the quintessential *retromusica* artefacts of the Eighties.

Her third album, *Absolute Torch and Twang*, was less conceptual and showed that she and her group, The Reclines, can play in a style that was lovingly traditional and sparklingly progressive at the same time. Lang's androgynous image, her rebellious intelligence and her ability to manipulate the images of country music have not endeared her to the Nashville establishment, but industry awards, record sales and accolades are mounting. Her next moves will be into jazz singing and cinema acting. "Music and acting are very similar," she says. "Not in a fraudulent manner, but it's the ability to dip into emotional pools that are inside and be able to express them on demand. I think that's what singing and acting are all about."

k.d. lang will play tomorrow, Saturday, Sunday and Monday at the Town & Country Club, London NW5, (071-284 0303).



Androgynous image? k.d.lang is finding increasing success without conforming to record industry stereotypes

JAZZ

Slow slide into tedium

Eubanks-Turré Quintet
Ronnie Scott's

THE idea of a front line consisting of two trombones always sounded dubious. While Robin Eubanks and Steve Turré are obviously convinced that the format can work, it is not easy to share their enthusiasm. One trombone is acceptable enough, 76 would be quite a spectacle, but two have their limitations.

There may be something to be said for the reactionary view that the instrument has withered away in modern jazz. So expressive at a gentle tempo, it usually loses impact when players attempt to negotiate extended solos at anything above slow-to-medium speed. Even the most gifted improvisers come up against this barrier, and anyone who has endured a solo set by Albert Mangelsdorff will know that the "multiphonics" school has even less to recommend itself.

Turré and Eubanks, who have both played with Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers, try to overcome the

problem with thoughtful arrangements and sensitive use of mutes. One of their strongest pieces, Turré's "The Q", developed into a mini-suite which exploited regular changes of pace and kept the focus of attention shifting between the horns and the piano of Renee Rosnes, one of the new Blue Note discoveries. Turré's display of sea-shell blowing, which is often an intrusive novelty-act when he appears with other bands, blended in surprisingly well.

His ballad tribute to the late Woody Shaw and the minor blues which opened the set, both outstayed their welcome. So did Eubank's "The New Breed". A funk tune inspired by his work with the trendy M-Base team in Brooklyn, it made initially diverting use of a seven-beat pattern and a psychedelic "wah-wah" pedal. Luckily, the leaders have a first-rate rhythm section, with Rosnes joined by Michel Camilo's bassist Michael Bowie and Teri-Lyne Carrington on drums - a long way, thank goodness, from her sledgehammer role in the Wayne Shorter Band.

CLIVE DAVIS

ROCK ALBUMS

Tapestry vision cracked by shadowy shapes

The Icicle Works: Permanent Damage (Epic 465800 2)
This White Rope: Rock Fall of Silver (RCA PL 90468)
The Del Fuegos: Smoking in the Fields (RCA PL 90422)

HERE are three guitar bands of immense potential, all of whom have recently made mid-career transfer signings to new record labels. Curiously, The Icicle Works, from Liverpool, having traded up from a British independent company of limited resources to the corporate muscle of Epic (home of Michael Jackson and George Michael) could muster only a modestly low-chart entry this week with *Permanent Damage*. Their first album release for two years, it is an alert collection of high-definition material written by the singer and guitarist Ian McNabb, which deserves to do better.

A man steeped in the traditional virtues of English melody rock, McNabb has a distinctive, plummy vocal style, redolent at times of Scott Walker, and a ringing, disciplined guitar tone, both of which he uses to grand

effect on the recent single "Motorcycle Rider" and "What She Did To My Mind", an epic tale of jealous insanity that ramps to its grim conclusion with lashings of minor-key drama.

This *White Rope*, from the desert community of Davis, California, mark the jump from minor to major label with the latest in a series of gloriously detailed misfires of strident intensity. Guy Kyser sings like a man in a deep fever, his voice a quavering moan that gusts fitfully across weighty guitar tapestries. The group conjures a musical vision that is tinted with a faint country hue, then refracted through many a cracked lens to cast strange shadowy shapes on the landscape. At the end of "Yoo Doo Right" squalls of uncannily controlled feedback merge into a spiralling typhoon above the insistent clatter of tom toms emanating from some hellish place below.

The Del Fuegos, a bunch of delinquents from Boston, play their shots with a much straighter bat. They have calmed down considerably since their master-

piece of 1987, *Stand Up*, but there is still considerable verve in their combination of R'n'B, soul and bar-band rock 'n' roll. Here they enlist the services of former J. Geils Band harmonica veteran, Magic Dick, who looses off several caustic salvos. Regrettably, Dan Zanes has forsaken the slobbish, neo-Tom Waits drawl that used to make his singing so wondrously heroic.

Madonna: *I'm Breathless* (Sire 7599 26209-1)

We are told that Madonna's new album is not a soundtrack, but "music from and inspired by the film *Dick Tracy*" in which she plays the part of one Breathless Mahoney, opposite Warren Beatty in the title role. Unfortunately, however you choose to dress it up, the resulting pastiche of a Forties film musical is something of an embarrassment to a performer who has fought such an uphill battle to win the kind of recognition for her artistic abilities which finally accrued from last year's *Like a Prayer*.

In the video for "Vogue", the

No 1 single from the album *I'm Breathless*, Madonna abandoned herself entirely to the Marilyn Monroe fixation which began to manifest itself at around the time of the *Who's That Girl* movie. The song is presented here as an untypically modern-sounding footnote to the main body of the material, but "voguing" - fundamentally a sexy synonym for posing - is certainly what *I'm Breathless* is all about.

The authentically musty air of old Doris Day routines and of Sunday afternoons slumped in front of black-and-white movies on the television permeates such jokey, pun-ridden show-songs as "I'm Going Bananas" and "More" (one of three Stephen Sondheim compositions), but the tone of Madonna's "in character" delivery rings false more often than not.

"Hanky Panky", a bustling ode to the joys of being tied up and spanked, sounds ridiculously sleazy when its only hope was surely a light and frivolous delivery. "Cry Baby" boasts some incoherently witless baby talk - "My guy is such a wet noodle..." -

sung in a grating bimbo Minnie Mouse voice, while "Something to Remember", the big set-piece ballad, does not have the tune to carry the weight of its ambition.

I'm Breathless is throwaway pap in period costume, a folly which, even allowing for the attendant movie hype, will be quickly forgotten.

The Jeff Healey Band: *Hell to Pay* (Arista 280615)

This is a disappointing follow-up to the *See The Light* debut which in 1988 introduced large chunks of the world to the blind Canadian guitarist who plays his guitar like a lap steel.

The problem is a surfeit of unimaginative, over-produced mainstream rock material, much of it written by the band itself, and inspired no doubt by the commercial success in America of the uncharacteristically ballad "Angel Eyes" from the last album. Virtually the only song to do full justice to Healey's remarkable talent is Mark Knopfler's "I Think I Love You Too Much".

DAVID SINCLAIR

CRITICS' CHOICE: ROCK, JAZZ AND WORLD MUSIC

ROCK

THE STONE ROSES: The truculent Mancunians mount a huge bank-holiday weekend bash at a customized site in the middle of the Mersey. Spike Island, Widnes, Cheshire (061 839 0858), Sun, 2pm, £13.50.

CLINT BLACK: This young Texan smoothie from ZZ Top's management stable is the latest great white hope of the New Country brigade. Mean Fiddler, 24-28 Harlesden High Street, London NW10 (081-961 5480), tonight, 8pm, £7.

THE DEL FUEGOS: Boston roots-rock bar band par excellence. Town & Country, 8-17 Highgate Road, London NW5 (071-284 0303), tonight, 7pm, £5.50.

SUZANNE VEGA: Earnest Greenwich Village folkie turned mainstream adult-rock star, touting the resonant but determinedly bleak album, *Days of Open Hand*. Apollo, George Street, Oxford (0865 244544), Sun, 7.30pm, £8. £10, Dominion, Tottenham Court Road, London W1 (071-580 9562), Mon-Wed, 7.30pm, £10-£12 (also June 1, 2).

HOTHOUSE FLOWERS: Irish quintet with a jaunty line in pop-mysticism; fronted by cute keyboardist Liam O'Meara; back in the charts with "Give It Up". Empire, Lime Street, Liverpool (051 709 1555), tonight, 7.30pm, £7.50-£8.50. Royal Centre, Theatre Square, Nottingham (0602 483505), Sun, 7.30pm, £7.50-£8.50. Capital, 481 Union Street, Aberdeen (0224 683141), Tues, 7.30pm, £7.50-£8.50. Edinburgh Playhouse, 19-21 Greenside Place (031 557 2590), Wed, 7.30pm, £7.50-£8.50. Leeds University, Liston Place (0532 439071), Thurs, 8.30pm, £7.50.

BELINDA CARLISLE: "Heaven is a Place on Earth" aural not renowned for the stirring quality of her live performances. NEC, Birmingham (021 780 4133), tomorrow, 7.30pm, £10-£12.50. Brighton Centre, King's Road (0273 202881), Mon, 7.30pm, £11.

BIC: Export Road, Bournemouth (0202 287297), Wed, 7.30pm, £11. Wembley Arena, Empire Way (081-902 1234), Thurs, 7.30pm, £10-£12.50.

DIO: Grizzled heavy-metal snarler promoting a tasteless new album, *Look up the Wolves*. Newcastle City Hall, Northumberland Road (081 261 2603), tonight, 7.30pm, £9-£10. Apollo, Arwick Green, Manchester (061 273 3775), tomorrow, 7.30pm, £9-£10. Hammersmith Odeon, Queen Caroline Street, London W6 (081-748 4081), Tues, 7.30pm, £9.

£10, Aston Villa Leisure Centre, 8 Aston Hall Road, Birmingham (021 328 4894), Thurs, 7.30pm, £10.

K.D. LANG AND THE RECLINES: Celebrated Canadian New Country singer who took home a Grammy for last year's *Absolute Torch* and *Twang*. Appearing under the banner of the

Route 90 festival (see review). Town & Country, 8-17 Highgate Road, London NW5 (071-284 0303), tomorrow-Mon, 7pm, £5.50.

DEBORAH HARRY: Ex-Blondie platinum punkette now a rather batty 44-year-old with a career once again in the ascendant. Newport Leisure Centre, Kingway (0633 258675), tonight, 7.30pm, £5.50. Royal Court, 1 Roe Street, Liverpool (051 709 4321), tomorrow, 7.30pm, £5.50. National Stadium, South Circular Road, Dublin (010 353 153 371), Mon, 8pm, £5.50-£10.50. Avoniel Leisure Centre, Avoniel Road, Belfast (0232 451564), Tues, 7.30pm, £5.50. Barrowlands, 244 Gallowgate, Glasgow (041 532 4801), Thurs, 7.30pm, £8.

BOBBY BROWN: God-fearing prelate's soul brother whose gruff 'n' grind routines tend to be a touch heavy-handed. NEC, Birmingham (021 780 4133), Mon, Tues, 7.30pm, £12.50-£17.50. London Arena, Limehouse, E14 (071 538 1212), Thurs, and June 1, 7.30pm, £13.50-£18.50.

KENNY ROGERS: Texan elder statesman of country, best known here for his hit "Ruby Don't Take Your Love To Town". "Lucille" and "Coward of the County". G-Mex, City Centre, Manchester (061 832 9000), Wed, 7.30pm, £16.50-£18.50.

BILLY JOEL: Multi-talented bundle of energy, but can he get through "We Didn't Start the Fire" without a carb sheaf for the lyrics? The Cliff Hardie Jazz Orchestra, Tommy Chase and "The Great Guitars". Hotel Russell, Russell Square, London WC1 (info 071-837 5590), Mon, midday-midnight, £5 per show, day ticket £16.50.

ROBIN KENYATTA: Hard bop and free-influenced alto saxophone from the former Archie Shepp and Andrew Hill sideman. Bass Clef, 35 Cornhill Street, London N1 (071-729 2478), Tues, Wed, 8.45pm, Thurs 8.45pm, £4.50, Wed 8.45pm, £4.50.

CLIVE DAVIS

WORLD MUSIC

YOUSOU N'DOUR: Stirring vocalist from Senegal, who has achieved fame beyond the world music circuit thanks to the championing of Peter Gabriel. Town & Country, Highgate Road, London NW5 (071-284 0303), Thurs, 8pm, £7.50.

HARIPRASAD CHAURASIA: Leading figure in the Indian classical tradition. Willesden Green Library Centre, High Road, Willesden Green, London NW10 (081-451 0294), Sat, 8pm, £5. Castle Museum, Nottingham (0602 419741), Sun, 7.30pm, £3.90.

AFRO-JAZZ: Seven piece group from Havana, mixing Cuban and traditional West African rhythms with jazz. Bass Clef, Hoxton Square, London, N1 (071-729 2478), tonight, tomorrow, 8.30pm, £7.

BATH FESTIVAL JAZZ: No Papasov's world music (tomorrow) is followed by Slim Gaillard's "vout" routine (Sun), Courtney Pine (Mon) and Chris Barber (Wed). Various venues, Bath (Further info: 0225 463662), tomorrow until June 10.

CLAIRE MARTIN: With a touch of Anita O'Day about her, this 22-year-old singer is equally at home with songs by Cole Porter and Thomas Dolby. HQ Restaurant, Camden Lock, London NW1 (071-488 0344), tomorrow, 9.30pm, £5. Pizza On The Park, 11 Knightsbridge, London SW1 (071-235 5550), Sun, 9.15pm and 1.15pm, £8.

LOUIS SCLAVIS: Rated as a possible rival to Jan Garbarek, the French bass clarinet/soprano saxophone player mixes modern improvisation with folk influences. Clueser's Hall, Clark Street, Edinburgh (031 668 2019), tomorrow, 7.45pm, £6. Queen Elizabeth Hall (see below), Sun, Bath Festival (opposite Courtney Pine), The Pavilion (info: 0225 463662), Mon, 8pm, £7.

JOHN SURMAN BRASS PROJECT: Worthy engagements from a 10-piece band led by the baritone saxophonist. Support from Louis Sclavis. Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank, London SE1 (071-928 8800), Sun, 7.45pm, £6.50-£8.50.

BLOOMSBURY JAZZ FESTIVAL: A day-long jamboree with the likes of Monty Sunshine, the Cliff Hardie Jazz Orchestra, Tommy Chase and "The Great Guitars". Hotel Russell, Russell Square, London WC1 (info 071-837 5590), Mon, midday-midnight, £5 per show, day ticket £16.50.

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AFRO-JAZZ: Seven piece group from Havana, mixing Cuban and traditional West African rhythms with jazz. Bass Clef, Hoxton Square, London, N1 (071-729 2478), tonight, tomorrow, 8.30pm, £7.

BLACK UNFOLDS: A cappella choir and dance troupe from Zimbabwe, appearing with the Shona music group, the Rwisiz. Willesden Green Library Centre, High Road, Willesden Green, London NW10 (081-451 0294), Sun, 8pm, £5.

THOMAS MAPFUMO: Event celebrating the 10th anniversary of Zimbabwe's independence and featuring Mapfumo, the leading light of their musical revolution of the mid-1970s. Town & Country, Highgate Road, London NW5 (071-284 0303), Tues, 7pm, £7.50.

WORLD MUSIC DAY: Music from Mali, Sierra Leone and Hungary, plus Kokoto and the Anglo-Asian Shengwa group, Gae. Hammersmith Odeon, 90 Tottenham Court Road, London W1 (071-284 0303), Sun, 1pm-10pm, free.

TOUMANI DIABATE: This young kora player from Mali has a sparkling, individual style which integrates influences from a surprising variety of sources. Junction Club, Clifton Road, Cambridge (0223 412600), 8pm, £5.50.

IVO PAPASOV: Imagine John Coltrane playing Balkan-style clarinet with the James Brown band and this will give a vague outline of the rousing Bulgarian wedding music of Ivo Papasov. Waterman's Arts Centre, High Street, Stratford (0247 5551), tonight, 10.30pm, £5.95. The Leadmill, Leadmill Road, Sheffield (0742 754500), Sun, 7.15pm, £4.

Bobby Brown's Café, Mansfield Road, Nottingham (0602 419741), Wed, 7.30pm, £4.50.

VASMALON: Hungarian five-piece multi-instrumental band based in Budapest. Their stirring music updates and adapts traditional music of the Balkans. Corn Hall, Diss, Norfolk (037 984505), tonight, 8pm, £5.50. Chaucer Club, Bungay, Norfolk (037 984505), tomorrow, 8pm, £5.50. West End Centre, Queen's Road, Aldershot (0252 330040), Wed, 8pm, £3.45.

DAVID TOOP

EARLY WARNING

ROLLING STONES: UK dates include: July 4, 8, 7, 13, 14, Wembley Stadium (notline: 0898 448822), July 9, Hampden Park, Glasgow (cc 031 557 8889/041 227 5511), July 16, Lansdowne Road, Dublin (001 980 249), July 18 (new date just announced), St James's Park, London (notline: 0898 448822), July 20, 21, Main Road Football Stadium, Manchester (071 379 4444/061 273 3775/061 227 9229).

TINA TURNER: UK tour dates include: July 14, 15, 17, 18, Birmingham NEC (021 780 4133), July 21, 22, Galeshead Stadium, Newcastle (cc 061 477 5511), July 25, Portliff Road Football Stadium, Ipswich (0473 217272), July 28, 29, Woburn Abbey (071-586 6768).

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* Hammersmith/Kingston stores closed Monday 28th.



THE Princess Royal meeting President Gorbachev in the Kremlin yesterday at the start of the first official visit to Moscow by a member of the British royal family since the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution. They discussed improvements in Anglo-Soviet relations. Tass reported. Her 13-day visit was seen as a move

to heal a rift between Britain and Russia since the killing of the last tsar, Nicholas II, of whom she is a distant relation. Nicholas and his family were killed at Ekaterinburg soon after the Revolution. Tass said Mr Gorbachev as telling the Princess Royal that her visit was part of the developing contacts

between Britain and the Soviet Union. "There is every basis for saying there has been good progress in Soviet-British relations," he said. The Princess Royal was to address students at Moscow's State University today, speak to religious leaders and attend a performance of the Bolshoi Ballet. Later in her visit she will

open a British exhibition in Kiev. The Queen, whose grandfather, George V, was a cousin of Nicholas II, accepted an invitation by Mr Gorbachev to visit Moscow when he was in London last year. No date has been set for this visit, which would be the first by a British monarch to Russia since 1908. (Reuters)

Political sketch

That's more than enough bees - Ed

MOST Members of Parliament have one, or at the most two, things to say. A life is spent nurturing a bee (or two) in the bonnet. The bee is fed and watered, taken out for exercise, and on special occasions adorned with a ribbon and bow and asked to perform tricks. But it is the same bee.

In this, our MPs are no different from other people. Unlike others, however, they are paid for it. The rest of Britain is confined to writing Letters to the Editors of provincial newspapers. And what is Parliament if not a neo-Gothic, all-singing, all-dancing Letters Page, animated into televised pomp and be-wigged circumstance?

Mr Dale Campbell-Savours, for instance (Lab, Workington) believes in an Establishment Plot. His life is dedicated to telling us about the sub-plots, and if upon his headstone, appears the summary "I SMELL A RAT," that will not be far wrong.

Mr John Carlisle (C, Luton N) supports South Africa, and takes every opportunity to explain. So when, this week, he rose to question the PM on her diary, it was no surprise to learn that the engagement which interested him was her meeting with Mr de Klerk.

And this is democracy at work. Parliament succours 650 varieties of sleeve-tugger: tug, tugging at the national sleeve on behalf of their constituents - dotty and sane.

An MPs' task, then, is to get a word in edgewise, and contrive to relate his own obsession to the subject discussed. One way is to lead a Debate on the Adjournment. The Motion - "That this House do now adjourn" - can be opposed, on the grounds that an important subject - or bee - needs to be aired first.

Thus it was that, yesterday morning, as other MPs packed their buckets and spades for a week's Recess, a little band of MPs waited eagerly in their place, a little knot of sulky ministers delayed their holidays, and a whole hive of bees buzzed importantly round the Chamber. A stack of Letters to the Editor were awaiting consideration.

Mr John Fraser (Lab, Northwood) has much to tell us but

MATTHEW PARRIS

France sends troops to assist riot-torn Gabon

FROM SUSAN MACDONALD IN PARIS, AND ANDREW MCEWEN

FRANCE yesterday sent reinforcements to Gabon, its former colony in West Africa, as rioters there took hostage Mr Peter Robertson, the British personnel manager of the Shell oil plant at Port Gentil, and nine other oil company executives. All 10 were later released, according to reports from Libreville, the capital.

President Bongo's position has weakened significantly over the past two days. There has been serious rioting, burning and looting at Port Gentil, the country's chief port and the centre of its oil industry, and to a lesser extent in Libreville.

France, which has 500 troops permanently stationed in the capital, dispatched an additional 250 men to Gabon yesterday, including a company of paratroopers. Officially their task will be to protect French citizens and interests, but they may have a wider stabilising effect.

M Jean Duffau, the French Consul-General in Port Gentil, was taken prisoner on Wednesday night by members of the opposition Gabonese Party for Progress, and the Consulate-General in the city was set on fire. The demonstrators were said to be

hoping that France would use its influence to persuade President Bongo to step down.

M Duffau was released early yesterday with no public statement. Two hours later it was announced that Shell and Elf employees had been taken hostage in the Shell offices in the city. In London a Shell spokesman confirmed that Mr Robertson, M Roland Toulouse, who is French, and Mr Anatol Bouroubout, a local Shell employee, were seized by demonstrators about noon.

The violence started on Wednesday after the discovery of the body of Mr Joseph Rendjambe, the leader of the Progress Party, in a Libreville hotel bedroom early that morning.

After serious rioting and strikes against the regime earlier this year, President Bongo announced that he was dissolving the one-party state and would introduce a multi-party system.

As the news of Mr Rendjambe's death spread, groups of people came out on to the streets in Libreville. The Hotel Dowe, where he was found, and other buildings were set on fire. Troops prevented the people reaching the Presidential Palace.

ABIDJAN: Guards at Ivory Coast's biggest prison went on strike late on Wednesday and threatened to release inmates tomorrow unless President Houphouët-Boigny met them for talks. (Reuters)



President Bongo: Calls growing for him to resign

Drama as little ships sail

By JOHN YOUNG AND ALAN HAMILTON

A PROUD armada of little ships, the elderly but still sprightly heroines of the Dunkirk evacuation half a century ago, set sail for France again yesterday to relive their finest hour. And, as if to add spice to a mere reconstruction, real-life drama again intervened.

Soon after 10am, they began assembling beneath the White Cliffs of Dover. The sun shone but there was a brisk cool north-easterly breeze and the boats pitched and rolled in the short choppy seas.

Eight miles off Ramsgate the African Queen, whose true moment of glory came 11 years after Dunkirk with Katharine Hepburn and Humphrey Bogart as passengers in John Huston's eponymous film, began shipping water in heavy seas and her crew of three feared she would capsize. A call from her

skipper had the Ramsgate lifeboat launched, but she could not find the Queen until a rescue helicopter from RAF Manston was scrambled and hovered overhead until the lifeboat could get a line aboard and tow her back to Ramsgate with almost as much ignominy as she sank in the film.

Mr Jim Hendricks, her American owner, said later that the drama was all for want of a half-inch spanner.

But she was not alone in her moment of need. Dover lifeboat had to go to the rescue of the yacht Papillon, whose skipper, Mr Richard Huggitt, suffered an accident, causing him a serious back injury, seven miles off the Kent coast and radioed that he was unable to continue the voyage. Another yacht, the Monarch, had to be towed back to

harbour. Soon the rest were away, led by the Royal Navy Auxiliary vessel Example. A cacophony of helicopters hovered overhead, while the frigate HMS Alacrity and the mine sweeper HMS Ledbury raced up and down the flanks, protecting their charges and warning other vessels off. On they sailed into the sunlit afternoon with the coast of France rising out of the haze. It may be only 35 miles or so from Dover to Dunkirk but it was beginning to seem a long way.

How much further must it have seemed to those who 50 years ago crossed and recrossed crowded to the gunwales with exhausted and wounded soldiers and returning again to face not the reunions and parties that will mark this weekend but the guns of the enemy.

Labour unveils programme of change for the 1990s

Continued from page 1

could provide, although Mr Kinnock emphasized yesterday: "We are committed to working with the market, not worshipping the market."

Ministers and the smaller parties moved quickly to condemn the package. Mr Norman Lamont, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, said it was

"nonsense on stilts" for Mr Kinnock to claim that tax increases would be limited to the very very rich. To finance this programme there would be tax increases for millions.

Mr Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, described the document as "unadventurous, cautious and

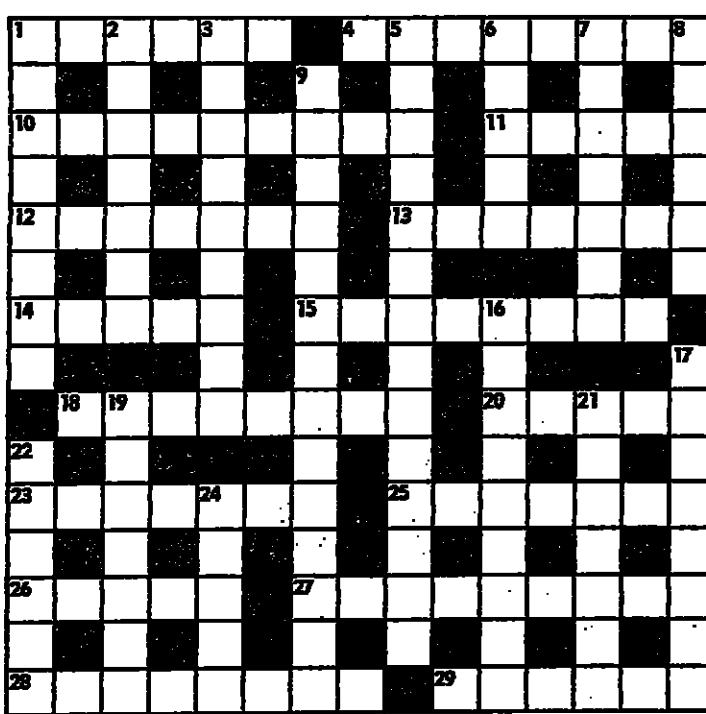
thin". Labour had lost a creed and failed to find a cause.

Mr John Wakeham, the Government's new information co-ordinator, said it was a huge list of open-ended spending commitments with no price tag. "We still find a bully boys' charter, with a return to flying pickets and secondary

action." Mr Kenneth Baker, the Conservative chairman, called it "a nothing-new, cost-yore exercise in deception". But Labour leaders last night saw the launch as completing the party's transformation under Mr Kinnock into a modern European-style social democratic party.

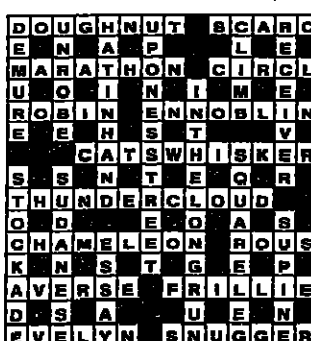
MATTHEW PARRIS

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 18,303



- ACROSS**
- Approve minimum wage increase (6).
 - Fish some trawlermen had encountered (8).
 - Area for spectators that did for Commons (9).
 - One making up for lack of practice (5).
 - Put up with passion in female's embrace (7).
 - Christian stating his position in Muslim region (7).
 - It's improper if leaders of one union, therefore, are contracted (5).
 - A severe reprimand, in the event (4,4).
 - Dark liquid making clouderly mixture (5,3).
 - Dismisses blackbirds (5).
- DOWN**
- Facility reporters have with crowd on television (5,3).
 - Pistol, for example, was antique (7).
 - Little point separating adjacent bays, perhaps (5,4).
 - Education reducing social inequality? (7,7).
 - Hard battle in which men change sides (5).
 - Give address provided by medical organization (7).
 - I can be relatively insensitive (6).
 - Book the school-leavers preserve is a novel (4,3,7).
 - Patience's importance for petty official (9).
 - Arrange deal with shop on Champs Elysees (8).
 - Decline to provide summary (7).
 - Judge ascent soundly (5,2).
 - Grab a little bit of air (6).
 - England opener, in fifty not out, scored slowly (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 18,302



Concise Crossword, page 15

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

WHO THE DICKENS

- NECKTIE
- A Sheriff's officer
 - The public language
 - An incompetent pick-pocket

GREGSBURY

- A workhouse overseer
- A rain literary lion
- An MP

SOLOMON PELL

- A shady attorney
- A shady money-lender
- The Dombey family doctor

MRS MAYLE

- Friend of Oliver Twist
- Crony of Sarah Gamp
- A crooked innkeeper

Answers on page 20

AA ROADWATCH

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London & SE traffic, roadworks

C. London (within N & S Circs.) 731

M-ways/roads M4-M1 732

M-ways/roads M1-Dartford T. 733

M-ways/roads Dartford T.-M25 734

M25 London Orbital only 736

National traffic and roadworks

National motorways 737

West Country 738

Wales 739

Midlands 740

East Anglia 741

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North-east England 743

Northern Ireland 744

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WEATHER

Most of the British Isles will have a pleasant, dry day with a good deal of sunshine. Some patchy cloud in the south-east will hold down temperatures a little. Wales, the south-west, central and north-western areas will have an early and late ground frost away from the coasts. The day will be dry and sunny with only patchy cloud. Scotland and Northern Ireland will also be dry with sunny periods. Winds light to moderate; temperatures will be a little cooler than yesterday. Outlook: Dry, sunny and a little warmer.

ABROAD

MIDWINTER: t=thunder; d=dew; f=fog; g=gale; s=sun; sl=sleet; sn=snow; l=light; c=cloud; f=fast

| Location | Temp | Wind | Cloud | Temp | Wind | Cloud |
|--------------|-------|------|------------|-------|------|-------|
| Aleppo | 24/25 | 1 | Majorca | 24/25 | 1 | |
| Algeria | 25/27 | 1 | Malaga | 24/25 | 1 | |
| Amman | 27/31 | 1 | Madrid | 24/25 | 1 | |
| Baghdad | 30/32 | 1 | Mexico C | 19/26 | 1 | |
| Bahia | 29/32 | 1 | Miami | 24/25 | 1 | |
| Barcelona | 19/26 | 1 | Montreal | 17/23 | 1 | |
| Bombay | 29/32 | 1 | Munich | 18/24 | 1 | |
| Buenos Aires | 24/25 | 1 | N York | 17/23 | 1 | |
| Calcutta | 27/31 | 1 | Naples | 24/25 | 1 | |
| Cairo | 24/25 | 1 | N Delhi | 24/25 | 1 | |
| Cardiff | 18/24 | 1 | Nice | 24/25 | 1 | |
| Chennai | 27/31 | 1 | Oaxaca | 18/24 | 1 | |
| Cebu | 27/31 | 1 | Peking | 18/24 | 1 | |
| Colombo | 27/31 | 1 | Porto | 18/24 | 1 | |
| Dhaka | 27/31 | 1 | Prague | 18/24 | 1 | |
| Dubai | 27/31 | 1 | Reykjavik | 9/15 | 1 | |
| Guangzhou | 27/31 | 1 | Rio de J | 18/24 | 1 | |
| Hankow | 27/31 | 1 | Rome | 18/24 | 1 | |
| Hong Kong | 27/31 | 1 | Sao Paulo | 18/24 | 1 | |
| Indan | 27/31 | 1 | Singapore | 27/31 | 1 | |
| Jakarta | 27/31 | 1 | Sofia | 18/24 | 1 | |
| Joazeiro | 27/31 | 1 | Sydney | 18/24 | 1 | |
| Kuala Lumpur | 27/31 | 1 | Taipei | 18/24 | 1 | |
| London | 18/24 | 1 | Tel Aviv | 18/24 | 1 | |
| Los Angeles | 18/24 | 1 | Toronto | 18/24 | 1 | |
| Lyons | 18/24 | 1 | Tokyo | 18/24 | 1 | |
| Madrid | 18/24 | 1 | Tybee | 18/24 | 1 | |
| Moscow | 18/24 | 1 | Ulanbator | 18/24 | 1 | |
| Mumbai | 27/31 | 1 | Warsaw | 18/24 | 1 | |
| Nairobi | 27/31 | 1 | Wellington | 18/24 | 1 | |
| Paris | 18/24 | 1 | Zurich | 18/24 | 1 | |

AROUND BRITAIN

| Location | Temp | Wind | Cloud | Temp | Wind | Cloud |
|-------------|------|------|-------|------|------|-------|
| Scarborough | 17 | 1 | 1 | 17 | 1 | 1 |
| Harrogate | 17 | 1 | 1 | 17 | 1 | 1 |
| Leeds | 17 | 1 | 1 | 17 | 1 | 1 |
| Sheffield | 17 | 1 | 1 | 17 | 1 | 1 |
| Manchester | 17 | 1 | 1 | 17 | 1 | 1 |
| Birmingham | 17 | 1 | 1 | 17 | 1 | 1 |
| Cardiff | 17 | 1 | 1 | 17 | 1 | 1 |
| Belfast | 17 | 1 | 1 | 17 | 1 | 1 |
| London | 17 | 1 | 1 | 17 | 1 | 1 |
| Edinburgh | 17 | 1 | 1 | 17 | 1 | 1 |
| Glasgow | 17 | 1 | 1 | 17 | 1 | 1 |
| Newcastle | 17 | 1 | 1 | 17 | 1 | 1 |
| Nottingham | 17 | 1 | 1 | 17 | 1 | 1 |
| Sheffield | 17 | 1 | 1 | 17 | 1 | 1 |
| Southampton | 17 | 1 | 1 | 17 | 1 | 1 |
| Swansea | 17 | 1 | 1 | 17 | 1 | 1 |
| Torquay | 17 | 1 | 1 | 17 | 1 | 1 |
| Wrexham | 17 | 1 | 1 | 17 | 1 | 1 |
| Yarmouth | 17 | 1 | 1 | 17 | 1 | 1 |

LONDON

Wednesday: Temp: max 6 pm to 6 pm, 22C (72F); min 6 pm to 6 am, 10C (50F). Humidity: 6 pm, 51 per cent. Rain: 24hr to 6 pm, nil. Sun: 24hr to 6 pm, 10.7 hr. Bar, mean sea level, 6 pm, 1017.8 mbars, falling.

HIGHEST & LOWEST

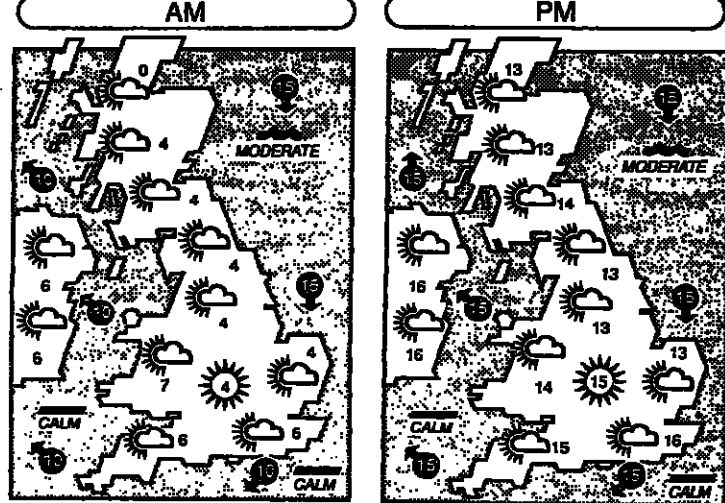
Wednesday: Highest day temp: Exeter, Devon, 23C (73F). Lowest day temp: Cape Wrath, North Scotland, 10C (49F). Highest rainfall: Llewellyn, Shropshire, 0.5 in; highest sunshine: Ventnor, Isle of Wight, 14.2 hr.

MANCHESTER

Wednesday: Temp: max 6 pm to 6 pm, 17C (63F); min 6 pm to 6 am, 10C (50F). Humidity: 6 pm, 51 per cent. Rain: 24hr to 6 pm, nil. Sun: 24hr to 6 pm, 14.1 hr.

GLASGOW

Wednesday: Temp: max 6 pm to 6 pm, 16C (61F); min 6 pm to 6 am, 10C (50F). Humidity: 6 pm, 51 per cent. Rain: 24hr to 6 pm, nil. Sun: 24hr to 6 pm, 14.1 hr.



LIGHTING-UP TIME

London 9.00 pm to 4.55 am
Bristol 9.05 pm to 4.55 am
Edinburgh 9.35 pm to 4.43 am
Manchester 9.15 pm to 4.53 am
Penzance 9.15 pm to 5.25 am

YESTERDAY

Temperatures at midday yesterday: c, cloud; f, fair; r, rain; s, sun.

| Location | C | F | Location | C | F |
|------------|----|----|-----------|----|----|
| Belfast | 14 | 57 | Guernsey | 15 | 59 |
| Birmingham | 14 | 57 | Inverness | 9 | 48 |
| Blackpool | 14 | 57 | Jersey | 16 | 61 |
| Bristol | 14 | 57 | London | 17 | 63 |
| Cardiff | 17 | 63 | Newcastle | 11 | 52 |
| Edinburgh | 13 | 55 | Newcastle | 11 | 52 |
| Glasgow | 13 | 55 | Reading | 12 | 54 |

POLLEN COUNT

The pollen count for London and the South-east issued by the Asthma Research Council at 10 am yesterday was 16 (low). Forecast for today, low. For the next 24 hours call National Pollen and Hay Fever Bureau: 0898 500429 (updated at midday).

TOWER BRIDGE

Tower Bridge will be lifted at 3pm today.

HIGH TIDES

Today: London Bridge 2.17, 4.2; Aberystwyth 2.17, 4.2; Bournemouth 2.17, 4.2; Cardiff 2.17, 4.2; Devonport 2.17, 4.2; Exeter 2.17, 4.2; Falmouth 2.17, 4.2; Glasgow 2.17, 4.2; Harwich 2.17, 4.2; Holyhead 2.17, 4.2; Hull 2.17, 4.2; Inverness 2.17, 4.2; Jersey 2.17, 4.2; Lough Erne 2.17, 4.2; Lough Neagh 2.17, 4.2; Lough Swilly 2.17, 4.2; London 2.17, 4.2; Liverpool 2.17, 4.2; Manchester 2.17, 4.2; Newcastle 2.17, 4.2; Nottingham 2.17, 4.2; Oxford 2.17, 4.2; Perth 2.17, 4.2; Plymouth 2.17, 4.2; Portsmouth 2.17, 4.2; Reading 2.17, 4.2; Southampton 2.17, 4.2; Swansea 2.17, 4.2; Torquay 2.17, 4.2; Wrexham 2.17, 4.2; Yarmouth 2.17, 4.2.

NOON TODAY

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